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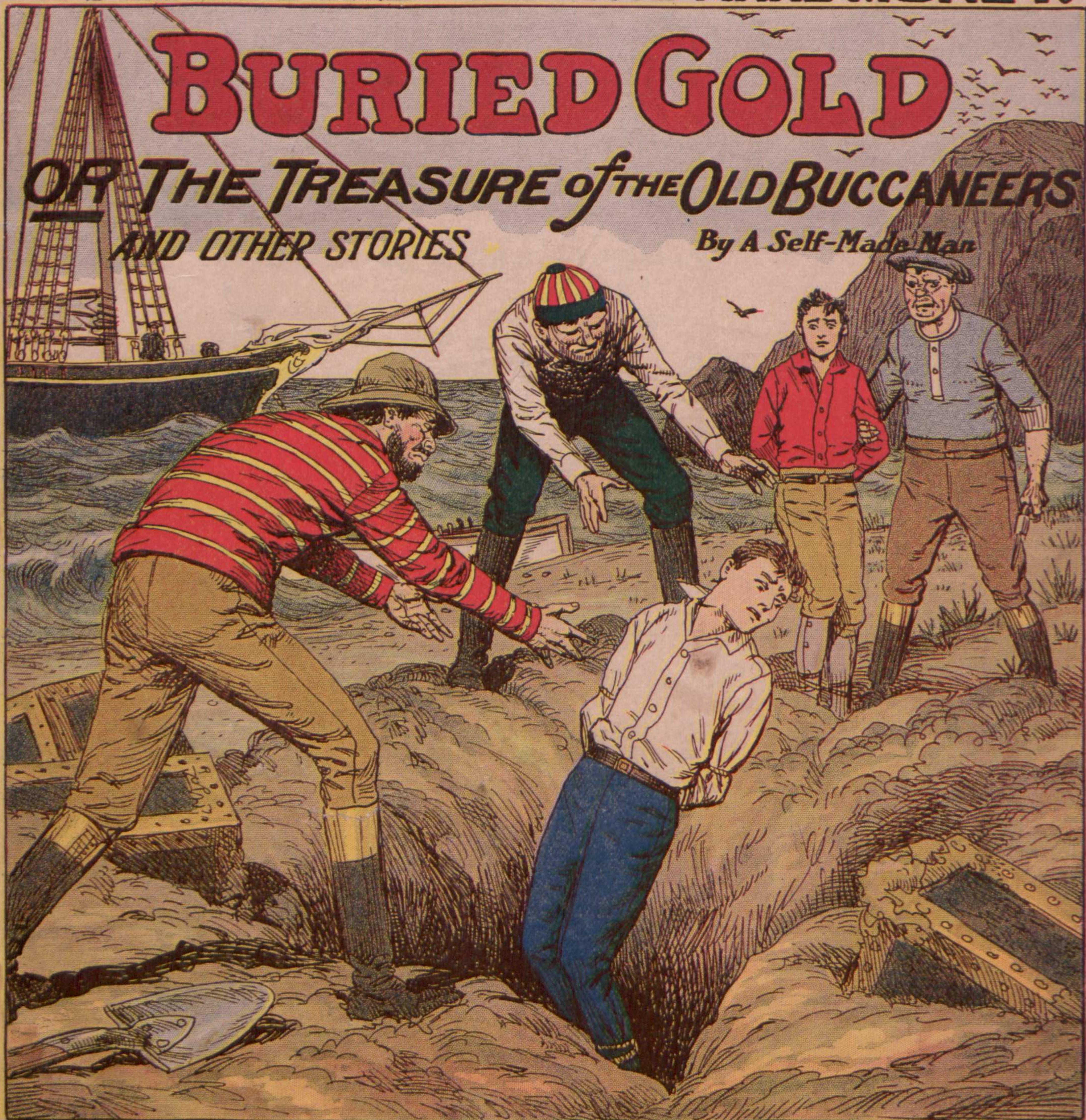
FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

BURIED GOLD

OR THE TREASURE of THE OLD BUCCANEERS
AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



"Into ze hole wiz heem!" cried Captain Barbier. He and his mate gave the boy a swing and flung him violently into the excavation. "Dees will teach heem to not monkey wiz what do not belong to heem."

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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No. 461.

NEW YORK, JULY 31, 1914.

Price 5 Cents.

BURIED GOLD

—OR—

The Treasure of the Old Buccaneers

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

JACK AND THE STRANGE SAILOR.

"Hi, there! Get off that track! There's a train coming. Didn't you hear the whistle?"

Thus shouted Jack Harding, a stalwart lad of eighteen years, at a man ahead of him, whose rolling gait, coupled with his cap and rough peajacket, closely buttoned about him, proclaimed him a sailor.

The stranger had started to cross a long culvert spanning a gully, through the big arch of which a mountain torrent rushed foaming over the rocks toward the bay where, on its semi-circular shore, stood a small seaport by the name of Bartown.

The whistle of the locomotive, as the down train, an express which did not stop at the village station half a mile below, passed a crossing a short distance beyond the curve, had just been borne to the boy's ears on the evening breeze.

He was on his way home from the cannery house, where he put in long hours every day but Sunday, and had noticed the man swaying along the track ahead of him.

The stranger, like the boy, had been walking the ties of the up track, and had he continued to do so he would have been safe enough.

But just after the whistle sounded he lurched over to the other track, apparently under the impression that he was getting out of the way of the oncoming train, whereas he was putting himself right in its course.

The man either didn't hear the boy's hail, or didn't understand it.

At any rate he paid no attention to it.

"The fool will be killed," cried Jack, starting forward on the run. "It's the Boston express, and will be here in half a minute. I must try and save him. Confound his stupidity! Can't he hear the rumble of the train? He must be half drunk. No man in his right senses would—"

The locomotive swung around the curve and rushed down on the sailor.

It was clear the fellow saw it coming, for he stopped and looked directly at it.

Instead of springing over to the other track, and lying down as close as possible to the outer rail, to escape the wind of the speedy train, he simply stood as though spellbound and did nothing.

The engineer saw him and let off the whistle of down brakes, throwing over the reverse lever; but with the momentum of a fifty-mile gait and a heavy train behind, there wasn't a chance of stopping before every car had passed over the victim, and the engineer knew it.

He saw the boy running forward to save the man, but it looked like a forlorn chance.

The locomotive shot upon the culvert as Jack seized the sailor by the arm, and with a mighty jerk pulled the fellow toward him.

The two went rolling upon the up track as the locomotive and train swept by with the speed of a meteor.

It had been the closest kind of a shave for the stranger, as well as for the plucky boy himself, for had the cowcatcher hit the man, both would probably have gone under the wheels.

The train passed in two or three seconds and the danger was over.

Then Jack got up and started to help the sailor on his feet.

The man was dazed by his narrow escape, and he stared with glassy eyes at the boy, his limbs refusing to respond.

"Get up, can't you?" said Jack. "Do you expect me to pick you up and carry you to the other end of the culvert? Get a move on."

"Sonny, you've saved my life," said the sailor, beginning to exert himself.

"You're welcome if I have. Where are you going? There are only two or three houses out this way, and I live in one of them."

"Where am I going, sonny?" said the seafaring man, starting forward with one of his weather-beaten, tarry-looking hands gripping the boy's arm. "Where I hope I'll find a welcome. To the cottage of my old shipmate, Bill Blunt."

"Bill Blunt!" cried Jack, in surprise. "Why, that's where I live."

"You do, my hearty? Tip us your flipper. I'm right glad to hear it. What's your name?"

"Jack Hardy."

"That's a name that sounds shipshape and regular. Are you a relative of Bill's?"

"No. I'm staying with Blunt just to keep him company."

That wasn't the true reason why Jack was hanging out at the cottage.

The real reason was little Ruby Rand, whom Blunt claimed as his niece.

She was a charming young creature of fifteen, and she didn't look at all like an offshoot of the Blunt stock.

Bill was a retired shellback who had sailed the seas from early youth till rheumatism compelled him to quit on the shady side of fifty.

A year or two ashore had almost cured him of his complaint, though he still had to use a cane to help his locomotion.

In Jack's estimation he was a hard case, and that opinion was shared by all who knew him, and that meant more than half of the inhabitants of the village.

Opinion was divided as to whether Ruby was really his niece, but the fact remained that he brought her with him when he came to the neighborhood and took up his abode in the cottage, which he rented, and she herself never denied the relationship when asked about it.

When Jack, who was an orphan, stopped at the cottage a year since, on his tramp to Barport, he was invited by Blunt to stay to supper, and then to stay all night.

Next morning Blunt, finding he was looking for a job in the cannery, proposed that he board regular with him to help keep the pot boiling.

The presence of Ruby, who had taken Jack's eye, and he hers, induced him to come to terms with Blunt, and he had lived there ever since.

"Stayin' with Bill to keep him company, eh?" grinned the stranger.

"Yes. So you're an old friend of his?"

"That's what I am, sonny."

"What's your name?"

"Thomas Tucker."

"And you expect to spend a few days with him?"

"Maybe more'n, a few if he's willin' to have me sling my hammock in the cottage."

"I dare say he'll find room for you if you can pay your way."

"Oh, I've got a few shot in my locker yet," grinned the sailor.

"You left your baggage in the village, I suppose?"

"My bag is aboard the schooner Mary Ann, which fetched me here from Boston. I wanted to find out how the wind blew with Bill before I brought my dunnage."

"That's a good idea. How long since you've seen Blunt?"

"While a while. Maybe six years."

"How did you find out he was living in this neighborhood? He's only been here about a year and a half."

"I met a chap in Boston who told me I'd find Bill livin' in a small cottage just beyond the railroad viaduct on the outskirts of Bartown, so I worked my way over on the schooner, and here I am."

"Say, why didn't you get out of the way when you saw the express coming?"

"I'll allow I was scared to death when I saw the locomotive bearing down on me, and I couldn't move to save my life."

"There wouldn't have been much left of you if I hadn't come along and pulled you away. Didn't you hear me yell at you before the train came in sight?"

"I was thinkin' what kind of reception I'd get from Bill, and didn't notice your hail."

"Your breath smells pretty strong of liquor. I guess you took a drop too much before leaving the village."

"I'll allow that I spliced the mainbrace more'n I'd ought to, but the other foremast hand, and the mate of the schooner, are good fellows, and I wanted to treat 'em right. You've found Bill a pretty good drinker himself, haven't you?"

"Yes, he can drink all right. All sailors do, I guess."

"I've seen landlubbers who can guzzle as much as the next one."

"So have I. There are several in this neighborhood."

"Bill always could hold his end up. Is that his cottage yonder?"

"Yes. It's the first house east of the viaduct."

"So I was told. Has a truck garden in the back?"

"Yes."

"And a flower garden in front?"

"Right."

"And a couple dormer winders aloft. I see one of 'em now."

"You got a correct description of the cottage."

"I'm told Bill has a little gal livin' with him."

"Such is the case. His niece he calls her."

"Who tends to the gardens and keeps house?"

"She does."

"Bill couldn't do anything in that line himself. How is he fixed for funds?"

"He doesn't seem to have much ready money."

"Do you know why he came to anchor in these parts?"

"No. He never told me why he came to this place. I dare say he took a fancy to the neighborhood."

"He quit goin' to sea on account of the rheumatics I was told, but I hear he's better than he was."

"He's much better, but has to use a stick yet when he goes to the village, or the cliffs."

"What does he go to the cliffs for?"

"To look at the ocean, I suppose."

"Meanin' he's anxious to get afloat again, eh?"

"He might be anxious to, but he isn't fit to go, and he knows it."

"A feller has got to be kind'r spry to do his duty afore the mast. I'm sorry to know Bill is laid up. But as long as he's gettin' better maybe he'll come around all right bimeby. I dunno as there's any hurry after all."

"About what?"

"Nothin'. I was just thinkin'. Here we are at the gate. What a fine lot of posies are growin' in this here garden. That little gal must spend a lot of her time over 'em."

"You mean Ruby? She does."

"So her name is Ruby?" said the sailor, as he followed Jack through the gate.

"Yes. Ruby Rand. She's as pretty as a picture, and as sweet as she's pretty."

"So I heard," chuckled the old salt.

The shell walk which led to the front door branched off around the side of the cottage, and Jack followed it with Tom Tucker stumping after him.

Turning the corner they came upon Bill Blunt, smoking his pipe, for he'd had his supper, and gazing off through the dusk toward the distant harbor of Bartown, which was in plain sight from the house.

To the left the ground rose gradually toward the cliffs, a mile or so away, and shut off the great ocean beyond.

"Good evening, Bill," said Jack; "here's an old friend of yours come to see you."

"Eh?" ejaculated Blunt, turning half around.

"Tip us your flipper, Bill, you old barnacle. It's me, your old shipmate, Tom Tucker, whom you saw last in the hands of the undertaker at Belize. You didn't expect to see me any more on top of this sublocnary sphere, did you, Bill? Well, here I am as lively as a cricket, and good for several years yet. I'll bet you're so glad you'll have the fatted calf killed for my special entertainment," and the speaker chuckled as if in the highest state of enjoyment.

Bill Blunt didn't look glad.

On the contrary, he seemed quite staggered.

Maybe he thought he was looking at the ghost of his old shipmate, though Tom Tucker looked like a very healthy ghost.

His jaw dropped and the pipe fell from his nerveless fingers.

He stared fixedly at the newcomer till his gaze must have taken in every line of his features.

Then he uttered a howl, either of fright or dismay, and jumping to his feet dashed around the corner of the cottage and disappeared.

CHAPTER II.

BILL BLUNT AND HIS OLD SHIPMATE.

Jack looked after him in astonishment.

So did Ruby, who came to the door to welcome Jack, as she always did.

As for Tom Tucker, he seemed vastly amused at the strange behavior of his old shipmate.

He slapped his thigh and chuckled louder than ever.

"It's as good as a play," he said at last, "to see Bill sailin' off afore the wind, like one of them Caribbean turtle catchers racin' to be first on the ground. And then the way he tacked around the corner, and him with the rheumatiz, too. Didn't you tell me, sonny, he had to use a cane to help him about? He must have had a sudden and miraculous cure."

It would seem so, for Bill Blunt hadn't developed such a burst of speed for many a day.

Jack and Ruby looked at Tom Tucker rather doubtfully.

The effect of his coming on Blunt had been electrical.

The boy, having heard Tucker's remarks to Bill, judged that Blunt believed his old shipmate dead, and his sudden appearance on the scene, without warning, had frightened him out of his wits.

"Say, Mr. Tucker," he said, "you oughtn't to have sprung yourself on Blunt that way if you knew he thought you were dead and buried. You must have given him a terrible shock."

"Yes, I reckon I did," chuckled Tucker, who apparently had no compunction on the subject.

"You shouldn't have done it. If his heart was weak he might have dropped dead. You ought to have used some judgment."

"I wanted to take him by surprise."

"You did that all right."

"Have you any objection to me walkin' in and makin' myself at home? Bill will be back, I reckon, when he gets over his excitement."

"Come in. Bill has had his supper, hasn't he, Ruby?"

"Yes, Jack. Yours is all ready."

"I suppose you'd like to eat something, Mr. Tucker?" said Jack to the sailor.

"I'll allow I wouldn't mind havin' a bite of somethin'," said the man.

"Ruby, what's on the bill of fare to-night?"

"Eggs and bacon," answered the girl.

"Well, cook some for Mr. Tucker. He says he's an old shipmate of Bill's. At any rate, Bill knows him and won't object."

Ruby proceeded to cook a mess of bacon and eggs for the newcomer, and inside of fifteen minutes the three sat down to the table to eat, for the girl always waited for Jack to come home before she had her own supper.

Tom Tucker proved a very agreeable personage.

He regaled the young people with some of his sea-going experiences, in the telling of which he broke off every once in a while to chuckle, as if some pleasant recollection recurred to him at that moment.

The living-room was lighted by a lamp which threw a cheerful glow about.

Outside night had settled down, and one could hardly see a yard away owing to the intense darkness, for the sky was overcast, and the neighborhood around was as black as the ace of spades.

A few of the village lights were visible in the distance, together with the lanterns hanging in the rigging of some of the vessels at anchor off shore.

While the three were eating at the table, a face suddenly appeared at one of the windows of the room.

It was Bill Blunt's not over handsome countenance.

After recovering from his consternation he had come back.

He flattened his nose against the window pane and observed what was taking place inside of the cottage.

He saw Tom Tucker seated at the head of the table making short work of the food which Ruby had placed before him, and he saw Jack and the girl in their accustomed places.

If he had taken Tucker to be the ghost of his old shipmate the delusion should have been dispelled by his present very life-like actions.

Shades from the other world haven't the solid look that Tucker had, and they are not supposed to be able to put anything so material as bacon and eggs inside their shadowy forms.

Blunt was in a position to take a leisurely survey of his old friend, and to satisfy himself that if Tucker had been in the undertaker's hand in Belize, British Honduras, he had come back to life before being planted in the cemetery.

Supper was prolonged owing to the yarns Tucker amused the two young people with, but as there is an end to all things, he finally shoved back his chair, remarked that he felt better now that he had taken a cargo of grub aboard, and mildly suggested if there was an extra pipe in the house, and some tobacco, he would take it as a favor if Jack produced both.

The boy took down the cigar-box holding the contents of a bag of short cut, and also the pipe that Blunt reserved for any village acquaintance who favored him with a visit.

Tucker loaded the bowl, ignited it with a live coal, and began to smoke.

Jack went outside to try and find Blunt.

Bill made his presence known and called the boy to him.

"Where did you pick up that rascal?" he growled.

"Rascal!" cried Jack, in a tone of surprise. "Isn't he an old shipmate of yours? He told me he was."

"Suppose he is, that isn't any reason why I want him here. Where did you meet him?"

Jack told the circumstances under which he became acquainted with the sailor.

"Why did you want to risk your life to save him?"

"Do you suppose I was going to see him run down by the train without raising a finger in his behalf?"

"I'd have seen him run down by fifty trains before I'd have done a thing for him."

"I judge he isn't a welcome visitor here, then?"

"Welcome! I wish he was in hades," said Bill, with an earnestness which showed he meant it.

"Well, he's here. What are you going to do about it?"

"Do! I don't see that I can do anything. He appears to be a fixture."

"Why don't you go inside and pretend you're glad to see him?"

"Because I'm not a two-faced liar."

"As he intends to remain all night, you'll have to put up some kind of a bluff. You can't stay out here in the dark."

As there was a thunder-storm coming up, Bill would certainly be obliged to seek shelter.

He recognized that fact and cursed the newcomer in choice terms.

"You can send him away in the morning, using as an excuse that you have no room to accommodate him," said Jack.

"Yes, I can do lots of things. Tucker has come here to stay till he's ready to go."

"He hasn't brought any of his things with him. He told me he wanted to see how the wind blew before he fetched what he called his dunnage."

"It doesn't make any difference with him how the wind blows. He's come on an errand, and he expects to get what he's after."

"What's that?" asked Jack, curiously.

"No matter. It's somethin' between him and me."

"You'd better go in and see him, for there's a thunder-storm coming up, and you can't stay out here and get wet or you'll be laid up with your complaint. Tell him you thought he was dead and buried long ago, and that his sudden appearance, without warning, gave you the shock of your life. You can admit that you thought he was a ghost, and that is why you took to your heels," said Jack.

Bill Blunt allowed himself to be persuaded to face the music, and he walked into the living-room with Jack.

"So you've come back, eh, Bill?" said Tucker, eyeing him with a grin. "Took me for a shadde from 'tother world, I'll be bound, come to harnt you, maybe. Give us your fin and you'll see I'm just as much alive as you are yourself."

The men shook hands, Bill without any display of enthusiasm.

Both of them drew their chairs up to the table which Ruby had cleared off by this time, and Bill looked into the cigar-box for his pipe.

Not finding it there, he felt in his pockets, and then recollecting that he had dropped it outside.

"Look around the door for my pipe, will you, Jack?" he said.

The boy found the pipe and restored it to him.

"How is it after you were pronounced dead by the doctor, and I saw you put in your coffin and carried off to the graveyard, that you're alive and hearty now?" said Bill, eyeing Tucker through a veil of smoke.

"Easy enough. I come to at the graveyard, pounded on the inside of the box and scared the natives who were about to dump me into the hole so bad that they dropped the coffin and ran for all they were worth," and Tucker chuckled at the recollection.

Most persons would have felt a thrill of horror on recalling such a narrow escape from being buried alive—the most awful of experiences; but the sailor did not appear to be affected that way.

"The coffin was a flimsy sort of affair," continued Tucker. "When it struck the ground it split open and I rolled out. I lay there awhile half dazed, and was found by some British sailors from a brig. When they saw I was not dead, they took me down to their boat and carried me aboard their vessel. The skipper looked me over, said he guessed I'd pull through with care, and poured some nasty tastin' stuff down my throat. As I wasn't able to tell anythin' about myself, and the sailors couldn't learn anythin' about me ashore, I was kept aboard the brig when she sailed, and later was landed at Rio. I was pretty nigh well then, and as I had urgent reasons for gettin' back to Belize as soon as I could, I shipped on a sloop in a day or two and reached the town in due course. Then I found that you had dusted out on a vessel bound for the States and had taken my bag with you. It was kind of you to look after my things, you old shellback, particklerly that there chart I set so much store by. Seein' you knew what the thing was worth, I figger you have it yet, and but for the rheumatics would have taken a shy at the cache of the old buccaneers. As I ain't troubled with the rheumatics, I'll take it as a favor if you'll hand that there chart back. As for the other things in the bag, you're welcome to 'em."

Tucker blew a cloud of smoke and looked at his old shipmate.

"I s'pose you wouldn't believe me if I told you I mislaid that chart?" said Blunt.

"No, I don't think I would. It would be too much to ask of me."

"Your bag was washed overboard on the trip to Boston."

"Was it? What a pity! How did it happen?"

"You see, we ran into a three days' gale, the bark sprung a leak, and the heavy seas flooded the forecastle. A lot of dunnage was lost and your bag went with the rest of the stuff," said Bill, watching the effect of his yarn on his visitor.

"Did you lose your own bag?"

"No."

"Nor any of your duds?"

"Nary one."

"Then I guess the chart is safe enough, for you'd have sacrificed everythin' afore you'd have lost that."

Bill made no reply.

He wasn't a good bluffer, and he knew it.

He also knew that he was no match for Tom Tucker.

"You might as well admit that you have the chart, you old sea griffin, for if you took your oath you hadn't I wouldn't believe it. Come now, own up."

Before Bill could make a reply, one way or the other, there was a brilliant flash of lightning and a sudden and loud clap of thunder shook the cottage to its foundation.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE NIGHT.

Jack and Ruby, who had retired to the front room overlooking the garden, a meagerly furnished little parlor, to entertain themselves, as the two sailors had no particular use for them, were startled by the crash.

The storm was coming up from the southeast, having started away out on the Atlantic, and had been gradually drawing nearer since dark.

It was still some distance away, and it looked as if it was driving to the northwest, and that Bartown and vicinity would only catch the tail-end of it.

This one bright flash and the terrific crash on the heels of it was unexpected, and, naturally, Ruby jumped and clung to the boy.

"That was a corker," said Jack.

"It gave me an awful start," said the girl.

"It must have been a thunderbolt. It may have hit some tree around here."

"I hope we won't have another like that. I am so afraid of thunder and lightning. If a bolt hit the cottage we'd all be killed."

"It doesn't follow that any of us would be killed. We might be stunned by the shock, though."

Jack got up and took a peep at the two men in the living-room.

There was a bottle of rum and two glasses on the table.

Also a deck of cards which Blunt was dealing to himself and his companion.

The pair seemed to have got on very friendly terms, at last.

"Bill and his old shipmate are as thick as two peas now," said Jack, on returning to Ruby. "Bill has brought out the rum bottle, and they are playing cards."

"He acted very funny at first, Bill did," said the girl. "Do you think he really took our visitor for a spirit from the other world?"

"Suppose you'd seen me in my coffin on the way to the cemetery, after a doctor had pronounced me dead, and five years afterward I called on you without warning—what would you take me for? Sailors are superstitious, you know. It's my opinion that Bill got the shock of his life. It knocked the rheumatism out of him for the time being. He never could have rushed around the house that way, without even a stick to support him, under ordinary circumstances."

Nine o'clock came around, the usual hour that the young folks retired for the night, except when they went to a dance or some entertainment in the village.

There had been no more violent claps of thunder in that neighborhood, nor extraordinary brilliant flashes of lightning.

The storm passed some miles to the west, and the thunder was still rumbling when Jack and Ruby went to their rooms.

The two sailors were talking and laughing in the living-room.

As Jack's room was directly over that part of the house, he heard them at frequent intervals till he dropped asleep.

Along about midnight Jack was awakened by somebody shaking his arm.

He started up and was surprised to see Ruby in her night-gown beside his bed.

"What's the matter, Ruby?" he asked. "Has anything happened?"

"The visitor, Tucker, is in Bill's room and is searching his sea-chest," replied the girl, in an agitated voice.

"The dickens he is!" cried Jack. "And Bill is asleep?"

"He isn't in his room."

"Isn't he? Where is he? What time is it?"

"After twelve. He must have fallen asleep downstairs, and the visitor is taking advantage of it to rob him."

"How did you discover all this?"

"I was awakened by a noise in Bill's room. It must have been the sounds made by Tucker when he broke the lock of the chest. I listened and heard other noises. As Bill often makes

sounds in his room, I don't know why I took particular notice of what I heard to-night; but I did. I got out of bed and looked into the corridor. There was a light in Bill's room, and the door was ajar. Bill doesn't often use a light in his room, but still he does sometimes when he's doing something out of the ordinary. I listened, and finally becoming suspicious, I slipped over to the door and looked in to make sure it was Bill. Then I saw it was Tucker, and that he was going through Bill's chest. Of course he had no right to do that, and as I couldn't do anything, I came here to tell you about it."

"Go back to your room. I'll get up and look into this matter. I guess Tucker is looking for something which belongs to him and which Bill has refused to give up, or has declared he has lost. We heard Tucker say that when he got back to Belize, after his illness—you remember he said he was taken to Rio Janeiro on a British brig—that he found Bill had carried his bag off with him when he left for the States. In that bag was a chart which Tucker said was of some value to him. I'll bet Bill wants to keep that chart, and Tucker doesn't intend to let him do so. He's probably got Bill drunk so he could look for his property. I guess he won't take anything that belongs to Bill."

Ruby returned to her room, and Jack hastily donned his trousers.

He marched into Blunt's room and surprised Tucker at his felonious work.

"Here, what are you about, Mr. Tucker?" he demanded. "What right have you to go through Bill's sea-chest?"

Tucker recovered his self-possession in a moment or two.

"I'm huntin' for a piece of property which belongs to me," he said, coolly.

"A chart?" asked Jack.

"How did you know it's a chart?" said Tucker, looking at him fixedly.

"I heard you speaking about it to Bill downstairs."

"Yes, it's a chart."

"Why didn't you ask Bill to return it to you?"

"He wouldn't hand it over, so I made free to look for it myself."

"Bill is downstairs, I suppose?"

"I reckon."

"Asleep, or drunk?"

"He's hard and fast asleep," said Tucker, with a chuckle.

"I don't know as I ought to let you monkey with Bill's things."

"Come here and look for the chart yourself."

Tucker got up and let Jack take his place.

"What's that streak on your shirt? It looks like blood," said Jack.

Tucker looked at his shirt and saw the dab of red.

"Oh, that's a splash of red paint I got aboard the schooner this mornin'," he said.

"I didn't notice it when you were eating with us this evening."

"It was there then same as it is now."

"You've got another one on your trousers."

"Same thing—red paint."

The sailor spoke so unconcernedly that Jack had no suspicion he was not telling the truth, though, being an observing boy, he wondered that he had not seen the very plain marks before.

Jack, who was satisfied that the visitor was entitled to the chart, went carefully through the trunk, but failed to find anything that resembled such a thing.

"It isn't here," he said.

"Tap the bottom of the chest and see if it has a false bottom," said the sailor.

Jack did so, but there was none.

Tucker then insisted on resuming his search, and went over the chest carefully.

"Hold up the clothes one by one and let me feel 'em over," said the sailor.

Tucker felt of the lining after examining the pockets, but the chart did not materialize.

Among the articles that the sailor had taken out before Jack appeared was a pocketbook holding quite a bunch of money.

Apparently he had made no attempt to take possession of it, for it lay on the floor where he had tossed it.

The search of the chest was concluded without result, and Tucker, for the first time, began to show an ugly streak.

He hunted the room all over; went through the drawers of the dresser; pulled the lower drawer out and looked under it; pulled the bed-clothes off and examined the straw mattress;

looked into the closet, and, in fact, left nothing escape him, not even the floor, which he tested for a loose board.

"It ain't in his room, that's sure," he growled, finally. "What in thunder did he do with it?"

"He might have lost it, as I heard him tell you," said Jack.

"Lost nothing! That chart is worth a hundred thousand in Spanish gold. D'ye think he'd lose that? He's hidden it somewhere else. Blame the luck! I'll have to trust to my memory, and I can't recall all the figures."

"How do you make out it's worth so much? I guess you're dreaming."

"Never mind how I make it out. It's so."

"Is it one of those charts that tells where to find a buried treasure?"

"Suppose it is; what of it? It belongs to me. If Bill hadn't been took down with the rheumatiz he'd have gone huntin' for it himself. Since he's been gettin' better he's been calculatin' on makin' a start soon; but I reckon he won't make any start now," said the sailor, with an ugly look. "A chap who goes back on his old shipmate deserves all he gets."

There was a menace in his tones that Jack didn't like.

"Maybe he gave that chart to the gal for safe-keepin'," said Tucker.

"You can ask her in the morning."

"I reckon I'll ask her now."

"No, you won't."

"Who's goin' to stop me?"

"I'll stop you," said Jack, resolutely. "I won't have her disturbed. I don't believe she knows anything about it, anyway."

"How do you know she doesn't?"

"I think she'd have told me, for we have no secrets from each other."

"Maybe you know whether she's Bill's niece or not?"

"Maybe I do, but I ain't saying anything about it."

"I don't believe she is. He never told me he had one, and Bill and me was pretty thick in our time. She doesn't look anythin' like him, I'll swear to that. He's had some object in pretendin' she was related to him, but there's an end of that now."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Never mind. You can go to your room now; I'm through up here," said Tucker, taking up the lamp. "See that you don't follow me downstairs. If you do maybe I'll forget you saved my life at the culvert. I'm in a bad humor now, and don't want to be bothered. A wink is as good as a nod to a blind horse," he said, significantly.

With the lamp throwing a halo about his rolling form, Tucker descended the stairs.

He didn't look behind to see if Jack was paying attention to his hint.

He appeared to take it for granted that he was.

The boy followed him with his eyes, his brain buzzing with strange suspicions.

One thing he noticed, and that was the sailor did not try to avoid making any noise.

He made sound enough with his feet to awaken any sleeper in the house, unless, of course, he was blind drunk.

Instead of going into the living-room, he steered for the little parlor.

Then he shut the door, and Jack heard nothing further from him.

"I don't like the looks of things," muttered the boy. "There's more cool villainy in Tucker than I supposed, unless I'm a poor guesser. I took him for an easy-going sailor, with that chuckle of his. Now I'm inclined to believe that there's more under that chuckle than strikes the ear. I wonder if he's done more to Bill than get him drunk. I'm going down to see, at all hazard."

With his bare feet Jack made no sound in gliding down the stairs.

He reached the door of the living-room, opened it, and looked in.

It was dark in there, as the boy might have guessed, seeing as Tucker had the only lamp in the house in his possession.

Jack shut the door, glided to the spot where the match-safe hung against the wall, and struck a light.

He expected to see Blunt seated in a chair at the table, bent over it perhaps in a drunken way, but the two chairs standing near the table, which had been occupied by the men during the evening, were empty.

Jack looked around the room but saw no sign of Bill.

The cards lay scattered on the table, and the empty rum bottle lay on its side.

There was nothing in the two glasses.

The boy struck a second match, then he saw something that made him gasp.

A splash of red on the edge of the table, another on the floor, and then drops of red leading toward the outside door.

"Good heavens!" he cried. "Can it be that Tucker has killed Bill?"

The match expired in his fingers, and the room became dark again.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT JACK FOUND IN THE WOOD.

Then Jack heard sounds in the hall, and a light shone under the door.

The sailor was coming toward the room.

After what he had seen the boy didn't think it would be well for him to meet Tucker.

The only place he could take refuge in was the pantry closet.

He got in there in short order.

Tucker entered the room.

He walked to the table, put down the lamp and looked at the red spot.

Walking to the sink he got a cloth, a pan of water and a piece of soap.

He proceeded to remove every spot of red in the room.

He threw the crimsoned water out of the door, and squeezing out the cloth stuck it in his pocket.

Then he sat in one of the chairs, threw one of his bulky legs over the end of the table, and seemed to be considering his next move.

At the end of five minutes he picked up the pipe he had been smoking, knocked out the ashes, refilled and lit it.

Then he went on with his reflections, the smoke curling about his head.

At last he picked up his hat, blew out the lamp, opened the kitchen door and went out.

Jack left the pantry, rushed to the window and looked out. The darkness of the night prevented the boy from seeing anything outside.

He heard the sounds of retreating footsteps near the corner of the cottage.

He rushed into the little parlor and listened at the window there.

The same footsteps were going down the gravel walk to the front gate.

The inference was simple—the sailor was taking his departure.

Jack went upstairs and dressed himself.

He felt that he must find Bill Blunt, whether he was dead or alive.

When he came out into the corridor, ready for the quest, the door of Ruby's room opened and the girl caught him by the arm.

"You were in Bill's room for some time with Tucker, she said. "What was he looking for, and where was Bill?"

"Tucker was hunting for a chart that belonged to him. I guess it shows where a treasure is hidden, maybe on some island. He didn't find it. If Bill had it he hid it somewhere else. I haven't seen Bill. He doesn't appear to be in the house. I'm going to take the lantern and look for him outside."

"Why should he leave the house on such a dark night?"

"That's a question I can't answer now."

"Where is Tucker?"

"He has gone away for good, I guess."

"I'm glad, for I'm afraid of him since I saw him in Bill's room."

"Go to bed and forget about him. You probably won't see him again."

Jack started downstairs.

He took the lantern from its hook on the wall, lighted it and left the house.

He feared that Tucker had killed Bill and carried his body into the straggling wood between the cottage and the cliffs.

Flashing the light around the outside of the door he looked for the trail taken by Tucker with the body.

Although it had rained heavily while the storm was passing, the ground was so hard near the house that there were no signs of footsteps visible.

Neither were there any stains that looked like blood.

Jack examined the whole of the little yard carefully till he came to the truck-patch.

Judging that Tucker avoided this cultivated spot, he went to one side of it and looked the ground over.

Finding no clew there he went to the other side, with similar result.

After spending a fruitless half hour, he gave up the search until he could take it up with more advantage in the daylight.

As he was not sure Bill had been actually done away with, he left the kitchen door on the latch, so he could get in if he was able to come back himself.

Jack didn't wake up until his usual hour of six o'clock.

Ruby was always up at that hour to get him his breakfast, for he had to report at the cannery at seven.

Before going downstairs he looked into Bill's room on the chance that Blunt had turned up, but he was not there.

Jack now felt certain that there had been foul play the night before, and he decided that it was his duty to make a thorough hunt for Bill, and if he found his dead body he would notify the town authorities and Tucker would be arrested on sight.

He found Ruby in the living-room starting the fire for breakfast.

"You didn't find Bill last night," she said, with an uneasy look in her eyes. "I'm afraid something has happened to him."

"I'm afraid so myself," replied Jack.

"Do you think Tucker did anything to him?"

"Do you mean hurt him?"

"Yes."

"I don't like to say. He wanted that chart mighty bad, but it seems to me that he could have hunted for it without injuring Bill."

"If Bill doesn't come back I shall be nervous all day. Tucker might return, and I don't want to meet him alone."

"Don't worry. I'm not going to work this morning. I'm going to look for Bill. While you're getting breakfast I'll go as far as the wood."

Jack left the house and took his way in the direction of the cliffs.

He went over the ground slowly, moving to the right and left, on the lookout for signs indicating that Tucker had carried his victim that way.

He saw nothing of the kind.

On reaching the wood he walked around among the trees, but to no purpose.

The wood was a very open one and afforded little concealment in the daytime.

Jack thought that Tucker might have merely stunned Bill with a blow that drew blood, then carried him to the wood and tied him to a tree.

He shouted frequently but got no answer to his hail.

At the end of half an hour he was satisfied that Blunt wasn't in the wood, even as a corpse.

On his way back to the house he saw where the thunderbolt of the night before struck.

The lightning hit an old dead tree and tore it out of place.

It lay on the ground a complete wreck, exposing a hollow interior.

Jack paused and looked down at the twisted roots.

Something in the debris caught his attention.

He poked around to see what it was.

It proved to be a small bundle done up in a piece of canvas.

The boy picked it up, wondering what the bundle contained.

"I'll take it to the house and investigate its contents," he said. "Looks as though somebody dropped it into the hollow tree, and the bolt of lightning brought it to light by smashing the tree."

Taking it under his arm he went on his way.

When he got back to the cottage breakfast was ready.

"I found no signs of Bill," he said, placing the bundle on a small side table. "I thought Tucker might have got him drunk, dragged him to the wood and tied him to one of the trees to get him out of the way. I found no indications that any such trick was executed by Tucker. The wood isn't large, you know, and is open. I went all over it. The only thing out of the usual I found was evidence that the thunderbolt last night knocked the spots out of a dead tree. I found that bundle among the roots and brought it back with me to see what is in it."

"Rather; but the tree was hollow, and the bundle had evidently been dropped into it by somebody who wanted to put it out of sight."

"Who could have done it?"

"I couldn't tell you, for I'm not a mind reader."

"I wonder what is in it?" said Ruby, curiously.

"I'll open it after breakfast and we'll find out."

During the meal Ruby kept referring to the unexplainable absence of Bill.

She said he never would have stayed away of his own accord.

Jack agreed with her, for Blunt's rheumatism always kept him close to the house, except that summer, when, feeling much better, he made occasional visits to the town, and sometimes went over the cliffs after dinner and remained there all the afternoon.

The boy did not care to say what his opinion was, but he feared the worst.

After the meal Jack picked up a knife and severed the stout cords which held the bundle together.

The piece of canvas had been put around it to protect the contents from the action of the weather.

After that was removed Jack came to a copy of the Bartown newspaper in which a hard substance was wrapped and tied with a cord.

He cut the cord, took off the paper and found a small tin box with a key attached to the handle by a piece of string.

"Now we'll see what we've got here," said the boy, opening the box.

He expected to find some money, or valuables—probably the result of a robbery in the neighborhood—but nothing like that was in the box.

There was a sheet of paper containing writing, and underneath that a stained and folded piece of heavy parchment-like paper.

Jack looked at the written sheet first and recognized the familiar pothooks of Bill Blunt.

"This belongs to Bill," said Jack. "He put the bundle in the hollow tree. He must have thought it safer there than in the house."

"What does it say?" asked Ruby, eagerly.

"I'll read it to you," said Jack. "Listen:

"In the event of my death I leave the contents of this box jointly to Ruby Rand and Jack Harding, as my heirs, together with everything I own in the cottage. The parchment is valuable to any one able to make out the meaning of it. I know the secret, but for fear this box might be found by some one who has no right to its contents I put down no explanation of it. The letter under the parchment, addressed to Ruby Rand, must on no account be opened by a stranger, but handed to her, as it contains information of no interest to any one but herself, and she must not open it herself until one year after my death.

"Witnessed by (Signed) WILLIAM BLUNT.
"John Tudor, Tom Haines—both of Bartown."

"My gracious!" cried Ruby. "Let me see the letter."

"I can guess what this parchment is," said Jack, taking it from the box.

"What is it?"

"The chart that Tom Tucker was after, but I am not sure that he ought to have it now. There is the letter."

The letter was addressed to Ruby and marked "Private. To be opened by Ruby one year after my death. BILL."

"Put it back. You can't open it now," said Jack.

The girl returned it to him reluctantly.

I think I ought to know what's in it," she said.

"We don't know that Bill is dead. Anyway, he says you mustn't open and read it for a year. It goes back into the box. Now we'll take a look at the chart."

He carefully opened and spread out the parchment.

It was yellow with age and was stained as if from tobacco juice, but the markings on it were perfectly clear and distinct.

To begin with, it was a rude drawing, oblong in shape, slightly resembling an animal, with two short front legs, one hind leg and a bushy tail.

Above it was written three words in Spanish, the translation of which appeared over them in lead pencil, in Bill's writing, thus: "Wolf Key."

A key is a low island, either of coral or sand.

Usually they are near a coast like the Florida Keys.

The indentation between the hind leg and the tail was evidently a cove.

Another one lay between the two front legs, and a third between one of the legs and the head.

A cross was marked in the last one.

Along the bottom was some writing in Spanish which neither Jack nor Ruby could understand.

Above the head was a vertical cross with compass marks, N, E, S, W.

This showed how the island lay.

On the head was a rude formation of a human skull.

An arrow pointed toward it.

Another arrow pointed from it.

Half-way the length of the first arrow was a cross from which sprouted an arrow which pointed east, according to the compass, accompanied by the letters XII.

Alongside the first arrow, between the feathery end and the cross, were the letters VIII.

That was all, and it was not very enlightening.

"What does it mean?" said Ruby.

"It means, as far as I can understand, that this sketch is the drawing of an island, called Wolf Key, which, from its name, I judge is situated somewhere in the Caribbean Sea, maybe in the great Bahama group which extends for many hundreds of miles, as you can see by consulting a geography. From the partial admission I got from Tucker last night there is a treasure worth \$100,000, more or less, buried on this island. This chart is presumed to point out the spot where it is hidden. The marks and the writing probably furnish the necessary clews, but as the latter is in a foreign tongue, which I guess is Spanish, it is only so much Greek to me. If I had a translation I could give you further information on the subject," said Jack.

"But you could have it translated, couldn't you?" said the girl.

"Yes; but just now we have Bill's fate to think about, so we'll put the chart back in the box, with the sheet of paper, lock it up, and if Bill turns up all right I'll hand it over to him, telling him how I came to find it, and maybe he'll explain the secret of the chart to us. If he won't we can't make him."

Jack told Ruby to hide the box in a safe place for the present.

"I'm going out now to make another hunt for Bill. I can't tell when I'll be back. I don't think you need fear that Tucker will come here again. He wouldn't have gone away if he hadn't given up the chart as a bad job."

Then Jack kissed Ruby and left the cottage.

CHAPTER V.

WOLF KEY.

Jack hardly knew in what direction to continue his search for Bill Blunt.

He went all over the ground in the immediate vicinity of the cottage under the impression that if Tucker had killed Bill he would have hidden his body in the bushes.

After an hour's search, which yielded no result, he started for town to see what the chief of police would think about the disappearance of the man.

The chief heard his story and detailed two officers to return with him to the cottage and make a thorough investigation.

A third officer was sent out to find Tucker, if he could.

As Jack said that Tucker told him he had arrived from Boston on the previous day, after working his passage on a schooner, the officer went to the water front to find the vessel and make inquiries about the sailor.

The officers who accompanied Jack to the house searched the building from cellar to roof, on the chance that Tucker, if he had killed Bill, had hidden his body somewhere in the cottage.

Their search was vain.

Then they went carefully over the living-room for a clew, but found none.

Jack showed them where he had seen what he believed was a splash of blood on the corner of the table, and also on the floor, and how he had noticed similar but smaller spots leading to the door.

He told how he had seen Tucker clean up all those marks.

The boy's statement savored strongly of foul play, and as the cottage yielded nothing in the way of evidence, the three started for the wood to make another search of that place.

Jack declared that he had been all over the wood that morning and had found nothing to show that Bill was there, either dead or alive.

The second search was as unproductive as Jack's first one.

"He might have carried the body to the cliffs and dumped it over," said one of the policemen.

"That would have been a long trip for him to make on a dark and rainy night," said Jack. "As Tucker is a stranger in this vicinity, I don't think he would have undertaken such

a thing. Anyway, when I surprised him in Bill's room, going through Blunt's sea-chest, he didn't look as if he'd been out of the house."

The officers decided to go over to the cliffs, anyway.

When they reached the edge, and the broad Atlantic, smiling in the sunshine, burst upon their sight, they looked for signs showing that a body had been dragged there and thrown over.

They found none.

They, with the boy, scanned the shore below for half a mile in either direction without seeing anything resembling a body. A body dropped down there, however, stood a chance of being washed away by the water at high tide.

The tide was low then.

It was high about three that morning, and at a rough calculation was three-quarters full at the time the supposed crime had been committed.

After a survey of the shore the officers decided that there was but one chance in four of a body being carried off by the sea.

On the whole they agreed with Jack that Tucker had not been to the cliffs.

So the party returned to the cottage.

The search of the immediate neighborhood was resumed, and when it proved unsuccessful the officers returned to town to make their report.

Jack remained to get his dinner and then went to town to see if Tucker had been arrested.

He learned that the sailor had come to Bartown on a schooner as he stated.

He had spent part of the afternoon in company with the sailor who belonged to the vessel, and had left him an hour before sunset, saying he would call for his bag in the morning.

The foremast hand said that Tucker had returned some time after midnight and turned in, and after breakfast had departed with his bag without saying where he was going.

Later it was learned that a man answering his description was seen boarding a train that went to Portsmouth.

As he could do nothing more toward lifting the mystery surrounding the disappearance of Blunt, Jack repaired to the cannery and worked the rest of the day.

He returned to the cottage at the usual time and found Ruby eagerly waiting for him.

He told her what he had learned about Tucker's movements after his departure from the cottage the night before.

During supper the sole topic they talked about was Bill's strange disappearance.

Jack was not so certain now that Blunt had been murdered by Tucker, for he could not see where the sailor could have concealed the body that their search would not have found it.

At the same time no other theory than murder would seemingly account for Bill's vanishing so completely.

After supper Jack asked Ruby to fetch the tin box.

He studied the chart for awhile, and finally made a copy of it, returning the original to the box.

During his dinner-hour next day he made inquiries along the water front to find some one who was acquainted with Spanish.

He was not successful.

Next day being Sunday he took a trip over to Rockland to see if he could find a sailor there familiar with that language.

An inquiry along the water front there resulted in his finding a man who understood Spanish first-rate.

He made a copy of the writing on a separate slip of paper, and this slip he handed the man and asked him if he could translate it.

The sailor ran his eyes over it and asked him where he got hold of the writing.

Jack replied that he had found it in a tin box.

"It's a direction for finding something buried in the ground," said the man.

"Is that so?" replied Jack, in an innocent way.

"Yes. I'll read it to you," and he did, as follows:

"Bring top of skull rock in line with lower edge of rising sun at low tide. Mark off VIII fathoms from water's edge toward rock. Face E and mark off XII fathoms. Dig I fathom."

"Read that off again. I want to take it down," said Jack.

The sailor re-read the slip and the boy copied his translation on a piece of paper.

"A sailor wrote that," said the mariner. "What's buried on that spot?"

"I couldn't tell you," replied Jack, evasively.

"Sounds like one of those old buried treasure yarns I've heard."

"That's what I thought it might be, but your translation makes no mention of a treasure."

"If it refers to a treasure it isn't necessary to mention it. Those are the directions to be followed in order to find it. What did you copy that writing from—a chart or something that appeared to be genuine?"

"An old piece of heavy paper."

"What else was on the paper?"

"An outline drawing supposed to represent an island, with compass directions and various markings."

"Whereabouts was the island supposed to be situated?"

"The paper didn't say."

"But it gave the latitude and longitude, didn't it?"

"No."

"Perhaps the name of the island was mentioned?" said the sailor, curiously.

"There were three words in Spanish above the outline."

"Let's have them and I'll tell you the meaning of them."

"I can't remember them," said Jack, who had no intention of telling the man the name of the island, which Bill Blunt had translated himself.

"Where do you live?"

"Over at Bartown."

"I'll come over and take a look at your paper, and maybe I can tell if there is anything in it. What did you say your name was?"

"Tom White."

The mariner wrote the name on the edge of a newspaper he took out of his pocket, and then Jack bade him good-by and hurried off.

"I must keep out of that chap's way if he comes over to Bartown," thought the boy. "I'm not going to show him, or any other stranger, that chart. I've got the information I wanted and have no further use for him. I can see that he suspects there is something in the writing, and he tried to draw out all I knew about it. He did not get any real facts out of me, though. The next thing is to find out where Wolf Key is situated. I feel sure it's somewhere in the Caribbean, the chances being that it's in the Bahama group. I've heard that there are hundreds of little islands mixed among the larger ones and called Keys. Most of them haven't a name, not being worth such an honor. Since this one has a title, it must be of more importance than the general run. I dare say I could pick it out on a regular chart of the Caribbean Sea, and get its latitude and longitude. But suppose I find out all about it, what then? I don't see any chance of visiting it and looking for a treasure which might not exist. The old Spanish buccaneers used to bury their spoil on many of the islands, but the chances are they dug it up later and spent it, having a good time in their own way—drinking and carousing. With that chart in existence it doesn't seem probable that the treasure it refers to has remained on Wolf Island for eighty years or more, even if the pirates who buried it did not return for it and take it away. However, Tucker evidently believes it is still there, or he wouldn't have been in such a sweat to get back the chart. Since he did not recover it, I wonder what he's going to do? He hasn't seen the chart for several years, and though he undoubtedly knows the identity of the island, and has a general idea of the directions, I assume it is a question if he could find the treasure, supposing it is there, without the chart. In fact, if he could he wouldn't have come after it."

Jack returned to Bartown and went to work next morning as usual.

That evening he went to the town public library and looked carefully over a map of the Caribbean Sea in an up-to-date atlas.

He could not find Wolf Island in the Bahama group, nor anywhere on the map, though he found a great many dots, standing for islands or Keys, that were not named.

That satisfied him that the island in question could only be located through a regular navigators' chart of the West Indies.

There was a brig loading at one of the wharves, and next day Jack went aboard of her after work and asked for the captain.

"He's at supper in the cabin," said the foremast hand Jack spoke to.

"Then I'll wait till he's through," said the boy.

"I guess he's pretty near through now. Go in through that passage and look into the first room on your left. That's the pantry, and you are likely to find the steward there. Tell him

you want to see the old man as soon as he's done supper, and he'll take your message into the cabin."

Jack followed directions.

The steward took his request to the skipper, and when he came back he told the boy to follow him.

"Well, what can I do for you, young man?" asked the captain.

"You have among your charts one of the West Indies, I suppose?" said Jack.

"I have," replied the skipper.

"I want to find out if there is an island called Wolf Key in the Caribbean."

"If you will wait till the steward clears away I will look the matter up for you."

"There is such an island in the Bahama group about fifty miles nor'east of Grand Turk," put in the mate. "I've seen it. Viewed from aloft as you approach it from the sou'east, it has some sort of resemblance to a wolf with three legs and a bushy tail like a fox. It is a low sandy Key only a few feet above high water, except at the point that might be taken for the wolf's head. There it is rocky, though not very high. Two coves jut in at that point. The entire shore of the Key is sandy and shelving, and there is little vegetation. What there was when I passed that way six years ago was around the head. The Key is a great place for turtles. The animals go ashore there in large numbers during the breeding season and lay their eggs in the sand. It is a favorite rendezvous for the turtle-catchers at that time of the year. No one else lands there."

"You have described the Key exactly," said Jack. "I should like to get the latitude and longitude of the island."

"We can give you that easily enough," said the captain. "Since the mate can put his finger on the island I'll turn you over to him."

Jack was invited to take a cup of coffee and some cold meat and bread, and he accepted the invitation.

In due time the table was cleared off, the captain went on deck to take a smoke, and the mate brought out the chart of the West Indies and spread it on the table.

"There's Grand Turk Island," he said, pointing at it, and that little spot there to the nor'east is Wolf Island. If your eyes are good you can read its name. I don't suppose you want its bearing down to seconds, do you?"

"No," said Jack. "In fact, now that I see where it is, and you say it is fifty miles northeast of Grand Turk, the latitude and longitude is not of as much importance as I thought."

"There it is, close enough for you to make the Key if you were a navigator. Longitude, 70 degrees 14 minutes west; latitude, 21 degrees 50 minutes north," said the mate, passing the boy a slip of paper on which he had written the figures.

Jack thanked the mate for the information, added the additional fact that the Key was about 50 miles northeast of Grand Turk Island, and took his leave.

CHAPTER VI.

THE UNMANNED SCHOONER.

It was dark when Jack got to the cottage, and he found Ruby anxiously watching for him at the gate.

"What kept you so long, Jack, dear?" she said, after he had given her his customary brotherly kiss. "I was beginning to fear that something had happened to you, too."

"Nonsense!" laughed the boy. "I was aboard a brig loading at one of the wharves."

"What took you there?"

"I wanted to find out the situation of Wolf Key."

"Did you learn what you wanted?"

"Yes. I know exactly where the island is. I guess I can show you on the map of the West Indies in your geography. That probably shows Grand Turk Island, and Wolf Key is about 50 miles northeast of it. It is only a small, sandy place. Nobody goes there but turtle catchers, and they only during the season when the turtles are hunted."

"Sit right down to your supper. It's been ready for nearly an hour."

"I had a bite aboard the brig, but I guess I can eat some more."

During the meal he told her all he learned from the mate.

"What good will this do you, Jack?" said Ruby. "You surely don't expect to go to the island."

"If Bill doesn't turn up and go treasure hunting himself I may make a trip to the island one of these days. With the chart, which holds the only clew to the supposed treasure, in my possession, the thing will keep. If the stuff is buried

there, which I am inclined to doubt, no one else can find it, so I can take my own time about investigating it. That won't be for some time, for I'll need money to reach the Tropics, and enough funds to charter a small craft to sail to the Key in."

"I'm glad you don't want to go right away. What would I do without you now that Bill is missing—perhaps dead?"

"Don't worry, little one. No fear of me leaving you."

That evening Jack got out his copy of the chart and added the latitude and longitude on the back.

It was unnecessary to put down that the Key was 50 miles northeast of Grand Turk Island, for the boy was not likely to forget the fact.

He also put the latitude and longitude on the back of the parchment chart.

During Bill's absence he thought Ruby ought to take charge of his pocketbook, so he got it out of the chest and handed it to her.

She put it in the tin box along with the chart and the letter, and kept the box in her trunk in the closet.

One warm evening in August Jack and a friend of his named Sam Swinton hired a sailboat and laid their course for the mouth of the little harbor.

Jack had invited Ruby to accompany them, but a bad headache prevented her from taking the trip with the boys.

They extended their sail outside the harbor.

The breeze was a smacking one, and as the night was fine, and both of the lads clever boatmen, they kept right out at sea until they were two miles from the shore.

"I guess we've got far enough," said Sam; "let's put back."

"All right. Hello, here comes a craft without any lights set. That's funny, don't you think?"

"It's against maritime regulations. What do you make her out to be?"

"A small schooner, as near as I can guess. She's a fore-and-aft at any rate."

"She's acting kind of queer," said Sam.

"She certainly is. If I were to hazard an opinion I should say there was no one at the helm. Notice how she comes up in the wind and then falls away? That's a sign that a craft is steering itself on a loose wheel. Then the circumstance that she doesn't show the ordinary lights goes to intimate that there's no one aboard of her."

"If she broke away from her moorings she wouldn't have her sails hoisted," said Sam.

"Hardly. She's heading directly for us. I'll steer for her, and when we get close we'll hail her."

"All right."

The strange craft, which proved to be a small schooner, neared them like a dark shadow, silhouetted against the bright horizon.

When a cable's length away the boys shouted together, "Schooner ahoy!"

The schooner lay low in the water, showing she had a cargo aboard.

She was painted black, with a red band, but the paint looked gray and rusty.

There was no one at the wheel, which swung first one way and then the other, as the swish of the water acted on the rudder.

That was pretty good evidence that no one was aboard of her, but the boys shouted several times to make sure.

"Here's a chance to make some salvage money," said Jack. "We'll board her, sail her into the harbor and libel her, then the owners will have to pay us a fair amount for saving her and her cargo. We might get \$500 apiece."

"Think so?" cried Sam, eagerly.

"I do."

"Then I'm with you."

Jack ran the sailboat under the schooner's lee quarter, and Sam caught a rope that hung down into the water.

"Jump aboard," said Jack, "with the painter and make it fast to a cleat. I'll drop the sail and follow you. Then we'll make a quick examination of the vessel and turn her nose toward Bartown."

Within a couple of minutes both boys were on the schooner's deck.

The opening leading down a flight of steps into the cabin looked black and forbidding.

Sam went half way down, fashioned his hands as a trumpet and shouted, "Ahoy! below! Anybody aboard?"

He received no reply.

"Strike a match, if you have one, and we'll look around," said Jack, who was close behind him.

Sam had some matches and he lighted one.

As the blue flame shot up and dimly illuminated their immediate surroundings the boys entered the cabin together and started to look around.

The mizzenmast shot up through the forward end of the cabin, and between that and the entrance stood a small table braced to the floor.

Two chairs, one at the head and one at the foot of the table, were also secured so they couldn't topple over in rough weather.

Above the table was a skylight with an unlighted lamp swinging under it.

There was no space for staterooms.

Instead, there was a bunk on either side perched on a couple of lockers, and hidden by a chintz curtain attached to a horizontal rod with metal rings.

Sam was in the act of reaching for one of the curtains when it was suddenly parted and a hairy looking face with great goggling eyes was thrust forth within a foot of Sam's own countenance.

He uttered a yell of fright and started back, dropping the expiring match on the floor.

Jack had caught a fleeting glimpse of the hideous face, too, and was as much staggered as his companion, though he made no outcry.

There came a rustle in the darkness, and before the boys could move each was seized by a powerful arm and flung against the mast, one after the other.

The shock deprived them of consciousness, and they lay on the floor just as they fell.

The strange being which had laid them out chattered volubly and then sprang up the stairs to the after deck.

Although it walked upright it was certainly an animal, for it had no clothing and was covered with hair.

Its arms were abnormally long, and its legs short in proportion to its body.

In the starlight it greatly resembled a young gorilla, almost fully grown.

The animal looked around and noticed the sailboat alongside. Its curiosity seemed to be excited.

With a leap it landed in the boat.

Almost the first thing it did was to inspect the painter which held the boat to the schooner.

Giving the rope a strong jerk, the hitch Sam had taken around the cleat pulled free, the animal tumbled over backward, and the sailboat parted company with the schooner.

The animal set up a jabbering, expressive, no doubt, of its surprise at the new state of affairs, and rushing to the bow reached for the schooner, now three yards away, and rapidly widening its distance.

The animal seemed inclined to leap across the watery gulf in order to regain the schooner.

If that idea was in its head it gave it up.

After staring at the retreating schooner, it glided aft and sat down beside the rudder, which it worked first one way and then the other.

The sail being down the boat had no way on her, and so the schooner, in spite of her jerky movements, gradually left her further and further in the rear.

During the night the wind changed around to S. by E., and the schooner went off on her course without any help from the rudder.

The sky, which had been quite bright and clear when the two boys sailed out of Bartown harbor, clouded up and threatened rain, perhaps a spell of dirty weather.

Toward morning the wind increased a bit in weight, and as the sea became rougher the schooner pitched to it, and when her stern rose the waves struck the loose rudder with a jarring sound.

The boys, however, were unconscious of all that was passing.

And so the little craft continued to work off shore, and get further to the south every hour.

CHAPTER VII.

ON BOARD THE SCHOONER.

Daylight, dull and wintry looking, was struggling down through the skylight, bringing out of the gloom the various objects about the cabin, when Jack came to his senses.

He sat up and looked about him.

Sam lay beside him, still dead to the world.

There was a swelling on Jack's head, and he felt as groggy as though he had been knocked out in a ring battle.

Several minutes passed before he began to realize where he was, and to recall the experience following the entry of himself and Sam in the cabin.

Then he noticed that it was dawn.

"My gracious! Have we been aboard this craft all night?" he ejaculated, as he struggled on his feet. "It must be around four, and we came aboard between nine and ten. At any rate the schooner has carried us some distance from the entrance of Bartown harbor. We must get back as soon as we can."

Then his thoughts recurred to the hairy monster which had come upon them in the dark and handled them without gloves.

It was not cheerful to think that such a creature was at large aboard, and might finish them the next time.

"We'll have to give up the idea of taking this craft into port," he thought. "It isn't a safe proposition with that animal to cope with, and not a weapon to defend ourselves with. I wonder what kind of a beast it is?"

Remembering it had issued from between the curtains enclosing the port bunk, he looked fearfully at those curtains now, the gradually increasing light showing up every part of the cabin now.

The curtains in question waved and trembled under the influence of the air that came down through the opening, and with the roll and pitch of the schooner.

Jack noticed that the motion of the little vessel was more pronounced than when they came aboard of her.

From that fact he judged that the wind had freshened somewhat.

Well, he must get Sam around so they could get away in the sailboat before they had another run-in with the hairy beast.

He shook his companion roughly and chafed his temples, but Sam did not respond.

Against the cabin bulkhead he saw a small red cask marked "Water."

A tin cup attached to a chain hung close to it.

Jack went over and turned the metal cock.

A stream of water ran out into the cup which he held under it.

He drank the water and felt somewhat better.

He walked over to what appeared to be a cupboard, opened the door, and found three shelves, with a band along the bottom of each to keep their contents in place, on which stood a row of plates, another of cups and saucers, a cruet stand and many other articles of table service.

A drawer underneath contained knives, forks and spoons.

Jack took a cup, filled it with water and threw its contents in Sam's face.

The second application brought his companion around.

"Hello, where am I?" cried Sam, staring about the cabin

"On board the schooner," replied Jack.

"Schooner! What schooner?" asked Sam.

"Don't you remember that we boarded one last night outside Bartown harbor?"

"So I do. We entered the cabin, and then something awful and hairy sprang upon us in the dark, and that is all I remember."

"Yes, whatever the hairy thing was it did us up for the time being. We have been lying here unconscious all night."

"All night! Great mackerel, is that so?"

"Can't you see that it's daylight?"

"Yes. Light is coming in through the skylight. It is pretty early, for the sun isn't up yet. Where is that beast that attacked us?" said Sam, looking around fearfully.

"I don't know. I haven't seen it since I recovered my senses. I guess it has gone forward somewhere and is asleep. We must get away before it awakes or there is no telling what might happen to us."

"That's right. Let us return to the sailboat and push off. If we've been aboard this craft all night we have some distance to sail back. You may reach town soon enough to go to work on time, but you won't be able to go home for your breakfast. You'll have to eat at a restaurant on the water front."

"Ruby has worried over my absence all night, I'll bet," said Jack, as they started for the deck.

"Why should she? There hasn't been any bad weather to put us two in any danger. Last night was as fine a summer night as you could pick out."

Jack stepped on deck and looked for the sailboat.

It was gone, as the reader knows.

"The boat is gone," gasped Jack. "Must have got loose somehow and floated off. Now what are we going to do, with that beast on board?"

"Oh, heavens!" ejaculated Sam. "And I can't see the coast line. The sky is all clouded up. If that sailboat is lost we'll have to pay for her."

"Never mind about the sailboat now. We have a more serious problem on our hands, and that is how to protect ourselves against that beast."

"What kind of animal do you think it is?"

"I couldn't tell you, for I didn't see it but for an instant."

"I saw its face. It looked like a huge baboon. It had a terribly fierce expression. Those monkeys are awfully strong. That fellow could squeeze the life out of us in no time."

"Since the sailboat is gone we ought to head the schooner toward the shore."

"Sure; but where is the shore. It is not in sight."

"It lay in that direction when we came aboard."

"The schooner might have altered her course during the night. There's the binnacle. Take a look at the compass card. I should say that a northeast course is what we ought to follow."

"The compass is not under the hood," said Jack. "It has been removed."

"That's hard luck. If the sun would only show itself for a moment we could get our bearings."

"The only thing we can do now is to hold the vessel up on her present course and trust to luck. If we sight another craft we'll signal for aid."

Jack moved the wheel around to the proper point that got the schooner under control, and two big sails with the jibs drawing properly.

On account of the supposed presence of the gorilla on board he decided to lash the wheel so the vessel would steer herself.

"The question is, where is that baboon, if it is a baboon?" said Sam. "It is probably asleep or it would have shown itself."

"The scuttle forward is open. I guess it's down there. We had better take off our shoes, slip over there, draw the cover over the opening and fasten it. That will make a prisoner of the beast, and leave us free to work the vessel into the nearest port."

"I'm game to do it," said Sam. "It may be the only way to save our lives."

Off came their shoes, and the boys crept forward to the scuttle.

Sam shut it and secured it by means of the hasp.

Then they felt easier until Sam suggested that the beast might after all be asleep in one of the cabin bunks.

"It came upon us out of one of them," he said. "Let's shut the cabin slide, too, to make a sure thing of the job."

Jack agreed that his companion's suggestion was a good one, and they hastened aft to put it in force.

"Wait a minute, I'd like to make sure that the animal is in the cabin," said Jack. "He can't be in both places. I believe we've got him caged forward."

"How are you going to find out?" asked Sam.

"I'm going down to peer behind the two curtains."

"I wouldn't take the risk if I were you."

"I think it's a fair one. If the animal was in one of the bunks it would have heard the noise we made after we regained our senses, and doubtless have shown itself. We may need the use of the cabin before we reach shore, so I'm not going to shut it up without real cause."

Jack went down softly and lifted the end of the curtain which hid the port bunk, where the animal was ensconced the night before, and saw it was empty.

He crossed over to the other bunk and found that one empty, too.

"It's all right," he said to Sam, who was watching at the opening. "The beast isn't down here."

"He might be hiding in some corner," replied Sam.

"There's no other place that offers any concealment."

Sam was satisfied and came down.

"Then we've got him safe forward unless he breaks out," he said.

"Yes. There's a coil of cable forward attached to the anchor. We can drag that over to the scuttle and recoil it on top of it. That will hold him."

They went forward and carried out that scheme, ignorant of the fact that they were only wasting their efforts because the gorilla was not on board.

Now that they had the animal off their minds they began to think about their own situation.

It was after eight o'clock, though the boys did not believe it was later than six, until they noticed the cabin clock.

They were both feeling hungry, and that was a serious matter unless they could find food on board.

"Let's see what we can find in the way of grub?" said Sam.

A second cupboard produced some jars of potted tongue, a tin of crackers, and various other eatables.

With water to wash the food down the boys made a fair breakfast off what they found in the cupboard.

While they were eating Jack spied two closed and hinged doors, opening upward, in the forward bulkhead.

An examination of these revealed a lot of provisions, including two whole hams, only one of which had been opened.

Subsequently a trap-door in the floor disclosed more canned food and crackers in boxes which had not been touched.

A case of light wine, and another of whisky, together with several bottles of French cognac, were also down under the trap.

"There's enough stuff aboard to feed the few people necessary to work this craft for a whole voyage to the West Indies and back," said Sam.

At the mention of the West Indies Jack suddenly recalled Wolf Island and the charted treasure.

He had his copy of the chart in one of his inside pockets, and he thought that here was a fine chance to go after the treasure.

With only Sam for a companion he felt that if they found the money they would have no difficulty in bringing it away.

If he had to rely on the help of strangers, as would ordinarily be the case, the temptation of taking the treasure away from him would probably be too strong for them to resist, and they might even murder him in order to secure the whole of it for themselves.

Such things had happened before and were quite likely to happen again.

The idea of going after the treasure excited him only for a moment.

He would gladly embark on such an enterprise if it offered reasonable chance of success; but he realized that it was almost out of the question, for he and Sam were not navigators, nor were they capable otherwise of sailing a schooner such a vast distance as that which intervened between their present position, close to the State of Maine, and the Caribbean Sea.

Five or six people, including a captain and a mate, were necessary to carry the vessel down the Atlantic, and handle her in rough weather, which they were bound to meet with before their destination hove in sight.

Without knowing how to make sights and calculate their position on a chart, without even a compass aboard, what chance had they of making Grand Turk Island, or any other of the Bahama group, except by accident?

Hardly any.

Whereas they would have every chance of going to the bottom in a gale before they had gone half the distance.

Thus thought Jack as he and Sam returned on deck.

CHAPTER VIII.

A STRENUOUS TIME.

As the morning passed the weather grew more unpropitious, and the boys became anxious as their chances of reaching shore seemed unlikely to be realized very soon.

While the wind did not increase, but on the contrary grew lighter, the horizon became misty, and the mist closed in on them by degrees, contracting the ocean into the limits of a large lake, and reducing their chances of seeing a sail if one appeared within signaling distance.

As the wind continued to die away, their only hope lay in a steamer plying between Boston and Maine ports.

Even that chance was doubtful, as the schooner was now well to the eastward of the Massachusetts coast, and beyond the track of the coastwise steamers.

This, however, they did not know.

They believed they were close in to the coast.

And they did not dream they were so far to the south.

Noon arrived, as they learned from the clock in the cabin, and shortly afterward they went to a cold meal.

They had heard no sounds from under the scuttle lid, which they looked for as soon as the animal they believed confined there woke up and tried to get out.

The thing was bound to make considerable of a racket, but nothing in that line happened.

"The baboon must be taking a long sleep," remarked Sam. "Seems so," answered Jack. "The longer the better."

"That's right. I wish it would never wake up."

The wind was now coming in fits and starts.

"I'm afraid we'll have a blow by night," said Jack.

"Then we ought to take in the sail while the chance is ours," said Sam. "We never will be able to handle the canvas when it comes on to blow hard."

Jack decided that Sam's suggestion was a wise one, and they proceeded to carry it into effect.

They lowered the after sail enough to enable them to tie the reefs to the boom.

Then they lowered it further and tied up the second line of cords.

Once more they let the big sail down and took a third reef in it.

They did the same with the mainsail, and then they reefed the jibs.

"I guess that will do," said Jack. "If we run into a gale, we can easily let the rest of the sail down by the run."

They were now in a dead calm, and the mist had closed in so fast that they seemed to be floating on a mill pond.

By five o'clock the schooner was swallowed up entirely by the fog.

Jack got more rope ready to tie the wheel with in case of necessity, then they went into the cabin, lighted the lamp, found a pack of cards and played whist till it was time to pipe to supper.

The calm was still holding.

"We ought to put a couple of lights up," said Sam. "We might be run down in this fog."

"I don't think the lights we could show would help us much, for they couldn't be seen very far. However, let's look for the schooner's lanterns."

They couldn't find them, and concluded that they were down where the animal was supposed to be.

"It's funny we haven't heard from the beast," said Sam.

"I should think it would wake up hungry and start on a rampage in the forecastle and galley. We couldn't help hearing the noise if it did."

The gloom of twilight was on the ocean, though the sun which could not be seen was still above the horizon, but this deepened gradually as night came on, and soon the schooner was floating through impenetrable darkness.

At nine o'clock they felt so sleepy that each turned into one of the bunks.

Along toward morning Jack was awakened by the pitching of the vessel and the howling of a gale which was tearing her over the water at a great rate.

Neither of the lads had removed more than his jacket and shoes.

Jack sprang out of his bunk and, holding on, looked up the small companion-way.

He saw nothing but blackness, but he could feel the wind as it poured down as through a funnel.

He heard the wheel creak under the strain of the rudder chains, but its fastenings were holding.

The schooner was closehauled; that is, the booms were aboard, so that the wind, as the vessel fortunately was on her right course, struck that part of the sails exposed obliquely and partially spilled out.

Nevertheless, she heeled over considerably, and was going like a racehorse.

By great good luck the wind had come from the quarter best for the schooner under the conditions in which she was placed.

No change of the rudder was imperative, but she would have gone easier had there been a hand at the wheel to meet flukes in the wind.

Most boys would have been terrified at their utter helplessness, but Jack had good courage, and he was familiar enough with fore-and-afters to see that the schooner was "doing pretty well."

Sam slept on unconscious of the warfare of the wind.

Jack lay down again, for he could do nothing to help things any.

After a time he dropped asleep and did not wake till daylight was sifting through the skylight.

The gale was still at its height, and there had been no change in the wind.

The vessel had traveled over a hundred miles since the gale caught her, and her course had taken her S. by E. right out into the Atlantic.

Sam woke up and joined his companion.

"A storm has come on after all," he said. "When did it begin? I didn't hear it till I woke up a minute ago."

"I guess it's been on most of the night. I was aroused by the tumult at two o'clock, and it was the same as it is now."

"Then it may blow out soon."

"I think it more likely to last all day. As long as the wind holds as it is we needn't care."

"Isn't there too much sail on her?"

"I don't know that there is. If the gale gets stronger we can let the sail down, but it will be a ticklish job, for we are heeled over a good bit, and that with a slippery deck, and no life lines, would make it a dangerous matter."

The boys made a poor breakfast, and then took up their post at the doorway, where they talked and hoped for the best.

"That beast is getting a shaking up," said Sam. "The coil of hawser has probably slipped off the scuttle cover, and it may break its way out. In that case it would stand some chance of being washed overboard, which would suit us exactly."

"The brute would cling to the foremast, and it's strong enough to hold out," said Jack.

"That's right. Those baboons are pretty nimble. It might make its way aft here. We must keep on the watch and shut it out."

"We couldn't keep it out if it smashed the skylight."

Sam hadn't thought of that, and the bare idea of such a thing made him nervous.

If the animal got in it might kill them both in no time.

During the afternoon the wind changed around some and the boys, at the risk of their lives, had to unship the lashings of the wheel and relash it after Jack got the schooner on her proper course.

There was no let up in the storm all day, nor that night, either.

The gale broke on the following forenoon, but it blew hard all day, and was still almost half a gale when they turned in.

Their course was now due south, and they did not discover the fact till the sun came out next morning.

"We're heading toward the south," said Jack. "As this has been our course during the last twenty-four hours, and pretty nearly so before that, we must be some hundreds of miles from Bartown, and away out in the Atlantic."

"Then we've got to turn around and run back, and it will probably take us four or five days to return," said Sam.

"I'd like to know just how far we've come," said Jack. "If I thought we could make the Tropics right side up I'd go on there."

"What the dickens do you want to go to the Tropics for?" cried Sam, evidently greatly astonished.

"Are you game to keep on on the chance that there is money in it?"

"Show me where the money comes in and I'll talk business."

"I'll do it, of course. I have a copy of an old Spanish chart which Bill got hold of through the supposed death of an old shipmate of his at Belize, in British Honduras, about five years ago. This chart appears to have been made by one of the old Caribbean buccaneers. You have heard that those rascals carried on repeated robberies of vessels on the Caribbean and the Spanish Main for a hundred years, or until they were finally exterminated by the British and American warships about the early part of this century, between 1823 and 1830, or thereabouts."

"Well?" said Sam, in a tone of interest.

"You have also heard, I dare say, that when business got strenuous with them, and they were frequently chased by warships, that they put in at out-of-the-way islands and buried the bulk of their plunder to prevent it falling into the hands of their pursuers."

"Yes, I've read that they did so."

"The chart, of which I possess an exact copy, shows where a considerable treasure of the old buccaneers was buried."

"Is that so?" said Sam, still more interested.

"It was hidden on the shore of one of the Bahama Keys, an island that bears some resemblance to a wolf, and was, in consequence, called Wolf Key, and goes by that name on the regular navigators' charts to-day. This island lies fifty miles northeast of Grand Turk Island, near the end of the Bahama group. I don't know if the treasure is still there, but as it is said to amount to \$100,000, it's worth trying for."

"I should say so," said Sam, enthusiastically.

"It is a long trip down there for us to make in this little schooner, short handed and without a navigator. We will run a great risk, but now that we are well started in that direction I don't know but we might as well keep on. If we can reach Grand Turk Island, the rest ought to be easy. I wish we had a compass, though. I don't see why the one that belongs in the binnacle was removed. We are pretty certain to run across a number of vessels on our way, and from one of them we may be able to get a spare compass, and the correct course for Grand Turk Island," said Jack.

"I'll stand by you," said Sam.

"Then we'll keep on?"

"Yes. The weather is likely to hold fair for a while after this blow, and if the schooner can weather one storm she can another, I guess."

"But we must get rid of that animal. A good way is to keep it under hatches till it starves to death."

"How long will that take?"

"It will be hard to tell. It may take a couple of weeks."

"Let's go forward and see if its stirring about now."

This they did, but not a sound came out of the forecastle.

The boys were puzzled by the silence.

"I wonder if the blamed thing could have gone overboard the first night, after doing us up," said Sam.

"It's hardly likely in a comparatively smooth sea."

"We haven't heard a sound from it since."

"The only way to find out is to open the scuttle, and I for one don't care to take the chance."

"Neither do I."

They ventured to pound on the scuttle and tramp about on the deck, to see what would happen, but nothing did, and they wondered whether the animal was down there or not.

As the day wore on the wind slackened to a fair breeze, and being now committed to the trip to the Tropics, they hoisted both jibs all the way up and let out the reefs in the big sails.

Under full canvas, with one of the boys at the wheel all the time, they bowled along in fine shape.

The weather held fine all the rest of the week.

The only thing that bothered Jack was the thought of Ruby, and her anxiety as well as grief over his disappearance.

That left her quite alone, but he comforted himself with the reflection that she had plenty of money to get along on, and if, in the meanwhile, Bill turned up she would be all right.

On the tenth day after leaving Bartown they came close enough to a bark to signal her.

The vessel lay to and sent a boat.

The second mate was in her.

When he found that only two boys were aboard the schooner he said he had no doubt that the captain would send a couple of hands to help them work the vessel into the nearest port, which he said would be Baltimore.

Jack declined his offer, and said all he wanted was a compass and their assistance in ridding the forecastle of a baboon or gorilla, which he believed was pretty well starved out by that time.

The two seamen who rowed the boat came aboard, the scuttle was opened, and all hands went down to tackle the beast.

He was not found there, so the boys were now satisfied that it had gone overboard the first night, and that they had been unnecessarily worried since.

The mate returned with a compass, and took the name of the schooner, and the port she hailed from, which was Halifax, N. B.

The boys could not furnish the name of the owner, but for fear that if they didn't the captain of the bark might insist on carrying them into Baltimore, Jack said she belonged to his uncle, and that they were bound for Port au Prince.

He did not consider it prudent to ask for the right course he wanted, and so the two vessels parted company, and the boys made no alteration in their course, which the compass showed was S.S.E.

CHAPTER IX.

STRIKING THE BAHAMAS.

We will not follow the schooner's course to the West Indies. It would be too long and tedious.

It is enough to say that after a fairly good trip they sighted land one morning a couple of points on the port bow.

Sam was the one who first spotted it, a low, cloud-like shape on the distant horizon, and called Jack's attention to it.

The schooner was then under all sail, making good time with a favoring wind.

The sky was bright and clear, and the sun red-hot.

The fact that it had been steadily growing warmer for the past week told the young treasure seekers that they were approaching the Tropics.

The cloud ahead in time solidified itself and the lads knew it must be land, the first they had seen since they lost sight of the Maine coast.

It appeared to be an island, and from the course they were following they did not expect to meet with anything else.

What island it was they hadn't the remotest idea.

They had found a chart of the West Indies among others in one of the lockers, but it was of no use to them.

They had also found a sextant and other nautical instruments, but were ignorant of their use.

Taking a sight at noon on a bright day, and then making the necessary calculations to determine the position of the schooner was utterly beyond them.

So they had simply sailed ahead, knowing that the trackless

ocean was clear before them until they reached the long, straggling group of islands known as the Bahamas.

Taking no account of coral rocks and sandy shelves, of which many are scattered at haphazard through the group, the islands are said to number about 500.

The chain extends, from northwest to southeast, 550 miles.

The islands generally are of reef-like shape, long and low.

With little appearance of soil they derive considerable fertility from the tendency of the porous rock to retain moisture.

Notwithstanding the number of the islands there was still a considerable chance of the boys, ignorant of navigation, passing through the group without even sighting one of them, for there are wide passages here and there between many of them.

This did not happen to them, and as luck would have it the island they were now approaching was an important one of the group.

It was called Mariguana, and was about thirty-five miles long, but very narrow.

As the schooner drew nearer the lower portions rose into sight, and the land appeared so extensive that the boys began to wonder if they had not passed through the Bahamas entirely and were heading for either Hayti or Cuba.

"It's a mighty big island," said Sam.

"That's what it is," admitted Jack. "At any rate, we'll find a port no doubt and be able to learn our bearings."

"It's about time we found out where we are. It's a fool trick trying to sail a vessel on your nerve and luck. A fellow feels lost at every stage of the game."

"He is lost, just as much as if he were driving a team across a trackless prairie, with only an indefinite idea of what was ahead of him. Here we have hit our first sight of land. All we can calculate upon is that it's an island; but even with the chart spread out under our nose we couldn't tell what island it is. We don't know whether we are in the middle of the Bahamas or at the eastern end. In fact, we can't swear but that is Hayti, or Cuba, or perhaps Porto Rico. Now if we were practical navigators we could tell just what island it is. We undertook a foolish risk, but the object to be attained seemed to justify it. People will do most anything to gain money. We may consider ourselves lucky in pulling out so well. We are probably now within a few hundred miles of our destination, and there seems no reason why we should not reach Wolf Island. Whether we shall find the treasure is another question."

"We'll find it if it's there, for your directions seem to be explicit enough," said Sam.

"I think we deserve to find it, for we have taken a big risk in coming after it."

"If this is the turtle season it won't be prudent for us to go to the island, since we are likely to find vessels in the neighborhood, and maybe shore parties camped on the place. With strangers around we couldn't do anything."

"We'll find that out before we reach the island."

Late that afternoon the boys were so close to the land ahead that they made out a small bay with one-story houses along the water's edge and in the near background.

They sailed in toward a small wharf, for they found it impossible to drop their anchor, and made fast.

The schooner was immediately boarded by a native official who asked Jack what he meant by making fast to the wharf before he had reported his arrival and shown his papers.

As he spoke in Spanish the boy didn't know what he was driving at, but saw that he did not look pleased.

Jack shook his head and said he did not understand.

The official took him by the arm and escorted him up the wharf and along the shore to a warehouse.

The proprietor was an Englishman, and was asked to act as interpreter.

Through him Jack gave a guarded explanation.

He said the schooner had drifted from her moorings in some way, leaving the captain, mate and crew behind, and not being expert navigators they had been unable to head her back, particularly as they were caught in a heavy gale, so they had sailed ahead, leaving it to luck where they would fetch up.

The storekeeper expressed his astonishment at this story, and so did the native official when it was translated to him.

"What island is this?" asked Jack.

"Mariguana, one of the Bahamas."

"How far is the Grand Turk Island from here?"

"About 150 miles, east by south."

"Good," said Jack. "That's where we want to go."

"The schooner is bound for that island, then?"

"She is."

"How do you expect to make it, not being navigators?"

"I thought I might pick up a native here who could help us out."

"I dare say you can. The official of the port might be able to provide you with a suitable person. I'll ask him."

The official said he could for a certain sum, which he mentioned.

Then it occurred to Jack that neither he nor his companion had any funds to speak of.

He was afraid to admit that, however, and said he would consider the offer and let the official know in the morning.

He inquired if he could buy fresh vegetables and fruits for American money.

The Englishman said he could.

"English money is current here. I will make an exchange for you, and then you can go down the street and buy what you want. You will find it very cheap."

Jack produced a \$2 bill, and the Britisher handed him eight shillings, saying that he would charge him eight cents for the exchange.

The official said he would call at the schooner about eight o'clock in the morning with a man, and the boy could take him or not as he chose.

"All right," replied Jack, who then started for the place where fruits and vegetables were on sale.

For four shillings he got as much as he and a native boy could lug in two large baskets.

His purchases included two dozen eggs and some fresh meats, but not much of the latter.

This addition to their bill-of-fare was very acceptable to the boys, who had grown tired of canned goods and cured ham.

"How are we going to pay the native navigator?" asked Sam, after Jack had told him all about his interview with the official and the Englishman.

"We can't take him. When things get quiet after night-fall we'll slip our moorings and trust to luck to reach Grand Turk Island. It is 150 miles from here, east by south."

"All right. You're the doctor. Suppose you had told the exact truth to the native boss, what would he have done?"

"He probably would have taken possession of the schooner, and that would have been the end of our cruise as far as Wolf Island is concerned."

"You were smart to put him off the track. But when we reach Grand Turk we may run up against the same difficulty."

"We won't stay there any longer than to make sure of its identity. Then we'll lay our course northeast with only fifty miles to go to reach the treasure island. We'll begin the run at daylight and have all day to find the island. In a fresh breeze this craft is good for ten or twelve miles an hour."

Night fell with tropical suddenness while the boys were at supper.

By nine o'clock the small village port was dark and silent.

A stiff off-shore breeze was blowing which favored Jack's plan.

They waited an hour longer, and then slipped their mooring ropes and slid out toward the Atlantic.

There were a dozen small vessels in the bay, but their departure passed unnoticed.

"The native boss will be as mad as a hatter in the morning when he finds the schooner gone," grinned Sam.

"What do we care? He won't be able to overhaul us if he should want to."

"He might send a native craft over to Grand Turk to warn the authorities about us."

"Let him. He won't catch us. In this breeze we should reach Grand Turk by to-morrow noon."

"If we don't miss the island."

"It is a pretty good-sized island. I guess we won't miss it."

"We'll pass the Grand Caicos group on the way. We can keep them in sight as a guide," said Sam, pointing at the chart, which was spread out on the table.

Jack roughly measured distances on the chart and said that Caicos Passage, which lay between Mariguana and the Grand Caicos group, was about sixty miles wide.

"The northern line of the islands run about fifty miles," he added. "Then Grand Turk Passage is about thirty miles wide. We still have some distance to run before we clear the eastern end of this island. Altogether the Englishman's statement of 150 miles to Grand Turk is pretty correct."

"He ought to know, I should think," said Sam.

As the night was a brilliant starlit one, and the air as clear as a bell, they could see for a considerable distance.

Jack kept within about a mile of Mariguana, and when they left it astern he laid a course east by south across the passage.

Sam had turned in an hour before, and was to relieve Jack at three.

When Jack called him there was no land in sight anywhere. "The course is east by south, remember, Sam. We should be in the middle of the passage by now. By the time my spell below is up, or around seven, you ought to see one of the islands, either ahead or on the port or starboard bow," he said.

Sam nodded and Jack went below and turned in.

At half-past six Sam made out what he took to be land ahead.

He was right, for thirty minutes later, when he called Jack, land was in plain sight on the starboard bow.

Jack took the wheel while Sam started to prepare breakfast.

When it was ready Jack lashed the wheel and went forward to eat, for since they began using the galley, to cook coffee, and other things, they found it convenient to do their eating there.

When Jack came on deck twenty minutes later he saw another island on the port bow.

There was no doubt in his mind that they were approaching the Grand Caicos group, and he told Sam so.

Then he returned to the wheel.

By noon they were close to both islands, with a third further to the right.

Jack directed Sam, who was steering now, to bear away more to the east so as to bring the island on the port bow around on the starboard.

As no more land showed to the left Jack said they had hit the northern part of the group.

"This is what I wanted to do," he said, "though it wouldn't have made a whole lot of difference."

"I suppose we'll reach the end of this group around dark?" said Sam, "though it doesn't seem to be what you would call dark at any time."

"About that time. I guess we won't put in anywhere for fear of complications, for we don't want to risk being held up on the last stage of our trip. I think it will be safe to stand for Wolf Island after we get close in to Grand Turk, which we ought to fetch by ten to-night if the wind doesn't drop."

The wind did fine down some and when the sun set they still had Grand Caicos Island, the center and largest of the group, on their starboard side.

They didn't leave the group astern till eleven that night.

Four hours later Grand Turk showed on their starboard bow, and the schooner was abreast of it by six.

Then the wind freshened up again and by seven they left that island on their quarter, and headed northeast out into the ocean on the last lap of their journey after a pirate's treasure.

CHAPTER X.

REACHING THEIR DESTINATION.

"As Wolf Key is a small island, very low in the water, I think we are going to have some trouble making it," said Sam.

Jack admitted that they had some job on their hands, but said that as luck had stood by them thus far he hoped it would continue to do so.

Luck did stand by them, for at noon they made out what looked like a rock rising out of the sea a couple of miles ahead.

They could see nothing else but water.

"That's a lone rock as sure as you live," said Sam.

"I'll bet it's the high end of the island we are making for," said Jack, beginning to feel excited now that their destination was close at hand.

In a short time they made out the waving tops of cocoanut or palm trees, standing, apparently, in the water.

They were within half a mile of the island before they saw a long sandy shore running away from the rocky head.

There was quite a bit of vegetation at the head of the island, with two coves and a broad sandy beach.

One of the coves appeared wide enough for the schooner to run close in and anchor under the shelter of the rocky head.

"We must give her room to swing with the tide," said Jack.

"How can we tell what the depth of the water is at low tide?" said Sam.

"At low tide she'll swing out."

"That's right," nodded Sam.

They ran in as far as Jack thought it prudent to go and then the anchor was let go.

It fell into the water with a splash, and the sails were let down with a rush.

The vessel slowly swung her stern shoreward, showing that the tide was rising.

She didn't go all the way around, as her keel hit the bottom and her stern listed to the starboard.

"She'll float all right in a little while," said Jack. "Now we'll eat and then launch the boat and go ashore. We can't do any treasure hunting to-day, for the sun is too high. We'll see what we can do in the morning at low tide."

They postponed going ashore until well along in the afternoon on account of the heat, which was something fierce.

There wasn't much to see anyway, so they could very well wait.

"I guess this isn't the turtle season," said Sam, "for there are no vessels on the ground but ours. We are lucky."

"If we are fortunate enough to find the treasure, or make certain that it isn't here, to-morrow or next day, we'll get away before any strangers come on the scene. We'll use the sounding line that's in the locker to measure off the distances with. That's laid off in fathoms, a knot at every six feet. Everything depends on beginning right. With the sun in the right position at low tide we start to measure off eight fathoms, or 48 feet, toward skull rock, which we can see from here, standing on that rocky ledge. Then we face due east—the compass will fix that all right—and measure off twelve fathoms, or seventy-two feet. That's all, for that is the place where the digging is to be done. Simple, isn't it?"

"Very," said Sam.

They went ashore at five o'clock, and the first thing they did was to walk over to the foot of the rocks and climb up to skull rock.

For a piece of nature's handiwork it was a wonderful imitation of a skull.

It's gruesome formation could be seen through a spy-glass at some little distance from the island.

Sam declared that man, not nature, had made it.

"It's too much of a likeness to be formed by accident," he said. "Take it from me, Jack, one of those old buccaneers who helped bury the treasure chiseled that as a guide mark."

Jack was inclined to agree with him, though it hardly looked like a piece of carving.

The action of the weather on it could easily have rounded down the work of an artist, and made it look like a natural product.

When one looked at it critically and saw how regular were all the parts of the skull the suspicion was likely to strike him, as it had struck Sam, that human hands had been at the bottom of the work.

The real cause of its origin, however, had no great interest for the boy.

All they cared for was its aid in bringing about the unearthing of the old buccaneers' treasure.

After satisfying their curiosity concerning it they extended their walk all over the little island.

Usually these keys were formed of coral, covered with sand washed up by the action of the waves over a long period of time.

This island appeared to be a mass of solid rock, through up, doubtless, by a submarine eruption.

With the exception of the head the rock was all below low water mark, on which layer after layer of sand had accumulated, until it rose above high water.

After that an earthy strata had gathered by degrees on the higher central point, running like a ridge from the head to the eastern end.

On this the wind had deposited the seeds of vegetation, which aided by rains and other moisture had blossomed out into a green verdure.

Into this verdure had come seeds that sprouted into cocoanuts and palms.

The boys counted a score of these, mostly the former, in the leafy tops of which peeped out the hardshelled fruits, now ripe.

The rock head was surrounded by vegetation, and many cocoanuts flourished there.

A stream of pure cold water bubbled up through a crevice on the top of the main rock, filled a natural basin, and then ran over and down into the vegetation and sand at a dozen places.

On the north side of the rocks was a hole which the boys

investigated, and found that it led into a small, dark cave big enough for one to stand upright in.

It was partly floored with sand which had been blown in there by the high winds.

"That would make a fine retreat from a hurricane," said Sam, when they came out. "In fact without something like that to fall back on it wouldn't be possible for one to exist on this island in such a terrific blow. I've read that the West Indian hurricanes, which come on suddenly, and don't last as long as an ordinary gale, are something wild and terrible. I'll bet the sea goes clear over every part of this island but this end. I wonder the trees stand it at all. I should think they'd snap off, they look so slender."

"Their long, thin trunks offer no resistance to the wind, and are as tough as iron and as pliable as Damascus swords. The wind catches their leafy tops and bends them over at right angles, but they don't break. When the wind eases up they spring back again," said Jack, who seemed familiar with the matter.

The sun was sinking in the ocean when they returned to the schooner, which was now riding on an even keel, as the tide was up.

By the time supper was ready it was as dark as it ever is in the tropics in fair weather.

Along about nine, as they sat talking on deck enjoying the sea breeze, the full moon rose and silvered the ocean, a beautiful sight.

"What's that?" said Sam, suddenly, pointing at something crawling up on the beach.

"That? It's a big turtle," replied Jack.

"There's another," said Sam.

"There's a third and fourth over there," said Jack.

In a short time the marine animals were coming ashore too quickly to be kept track off.

They squatted down above high tide and began to make the sand fly with their flippers.

Into trenches thus formed they laid their eggs and covered them up.

"This must be the beginning of the turtle season," said Jack. "At any rate we have no time to lose. We are liable to have company at any moment."

They soon went to bed and were up bright and early.

While Sam was getting breakfast Jack saw that the schooner was slowly swinging her stern seaward.

This indicated that the tide was going out.

"Fine and dandy!" he ejaculated. "It will be low tide by nine o'clock, I figure, and that should bring the sun about right for us. The sooner we get this treasure job over with the better."

He walked forward and told Sam.

After breakfast they began making their preparations.

They had found a shovel on board some days before in the forecastle, with a carpenter's toolchest.

Sam tossed it into the boat along with the lead line and other articles they thought they might require.

By eight o'clock they were on the beach.

Jack tried to sight the sun behind skull rock, but it wasn't high enough yet.

They sat down and watched the tide as it fell lower and lower.

Jack pushed a sharp stake down at the water line, and as the sea kept retiring from it he put it in a fresh spot.

Every little while he looked at skull rock.

At length he saw the sun rising behind it.

Higher and higher it rose.

The skull was now in the center of its flaming disk.

Then Jack saw that the tide was slack and was just kissing the stake where he had put it last.

The sun was almost in the exact position indicated by the writing on the chart.

As it was low tide there was no reason for waiting any longer.

"Now, Sam, I'll hold the end of the line against this stake and you measure off eight fathoms and drive a stake there. Then place the compass at that spot. I'll sight east and hold the cord. When you have run off twelve fathoms stop and face me. When I motion my arm to the right or the left move that way slowly and stop when I hold up my hand. Push a stake into the sand. We'll make a large cross at the stake and then dig at the intersection of the lines," said Jack.

The boys lost no time in measuring off the ground.

The cross was made at the intersection of the stake, the stake removed and Jack turned up the first shovelful of sand and earth.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SURPRISE.

Jack worked for ten minutes and then turned the job over to Sam.

Alternately they worked and sweated like good fellows.

"We have to dig down six feet," said Sam, mopping his brow.

"That is the direction."

"I wonder why such a deep hole was necessary. I should think that in such an out-of-the-way spot as this that three feet of covering would be enough to hide anything."

"The buccaneers figured that a foot or two of the sand might be blown away in the course of time."

"I think it would be the opposition—that a foot or two more would be added. That's the way this part of the island has grown."

"They did not intend to let the treasure lie long here—perhaps only till the chance offered for them to return after it."

"If that is so we'll have all our trouble for nothing."

"That's a chance we knew we had to take. Go ahead or I'll take the shovel."

Sam resumed his work, and in five minutes yielded to Jack.

So they kept on for an hour, their labor being doubled by the falling in of the sands at the sides.

Both finally quit for half an hour, and rested themselves under the shadow of the rocks.

They spent the time speculating as to whether they would find anything after all their trouble.

Had one of them sauntered around to the other side of the rocks he would have seen a large schooner heading for the island from the southeast.

This vessel was a turtle catcher, which had come from Puerto Plata, in Hayti.

She was called the *La Belle Suzanne*, and was commanded by a rascally Frenchman named Pierre Barbier, who had lived in the West Indies the greater part of his life.

He had a large crew of fellows as unscrupulous as himself.

The other turtle catcher feared and detested him and his outfit.

And not without reason, for there was always trouble when Captain Barbier and his schooner came among them.

He hogged everything in the turtle line, and the protests of his rivals went for nothing with him.

He and his crowd would just as soon fight as eat and drink, and they got into a scrap on the slightest pretext.

Naturally the skipper of *La Belle Suzanne* made more money in the turtle trade than any other owner, and his crew always had plenty of funds to have a good time with when they were ashore at the wine shops.

He was callous enough and nervy enough and resourceful enough to have made a name for himself in that villainous calling.

As the Frenchman and his vessel approached the island he made out the small schooner which had brought the boys to that locality lying at anchor close in shore.

He naturally judged that one of his rivals had reached the island ahead of him, and he grinned horribly at the surprise he expected to hand out to the other fellow.

A small turtle catcher could not hurt his business in the slightest particular, as there were lots of turtles to be got around Wolf Island, but he happened to be feeling belligerent just now, and he wanted the whole place to himself.

He had no legal right to interfere with any other turtle catcher, but that fact didn't worry him.

He had ways of making things unpleasant for other people without making much evidence against himself.

The boys, unconscious of the coming of strangers, for their thoughts were so engrossed with the treasure that they forgot about their surroundings, resumed work in the hole, and in course of an hour Sam gave a shout.

"What now?" said Jack.

"I've struck something hard," he said.

Jack was on his feet and at the edge of the hole in half a minute.

"Listen," said Sam, shoving his spade into the sand.

Jack heard a solid thud which showed the shovel was meeting other resistance than the sand.

"Clear the sand away at that spot and let's see what you've struck," said Jack.

Rapid work presently revealed the end of an iron-bound chest.

"Hooray!" shouted Sam. "It's the treasure."

Jack and his friend did an impromptu Indian war dance at

the discovery, and when they had relieved their feelings they hastened to dig the box out.

It took some time, and they perspired so freely that their few garments were almost as damp as if the boys had gone into the sea with them on and were standing in the sun to dry them.

The chest was an old-fashioned one and not very large.

It was heavy, as they expected, and they had the time of their lives landing it on the top of the sand.

"Shall we drag it to the boat or open it and then carry the contents aboard the schooner?" said Sam.

"We'll open it here and take the stuff aboard piecemeal. We don't want to take this chest with us for it would attract attention, and that would not be to our interests."

Thus spoke Jack as he picked up a hammer and a cold chisel to break the heavy lock with.

"We made no mistake in coming here," said Sam, gaily. "Do you think there is a hundred thousand dollars in money in this chest?"

"No. I guess most of the treasure consists of watches, jewelry, and small silver and gold ornaments."

"Fifty thousand apiece will make us rich."

"I doubt if there is half of that in this chest."

"Well, \$25,000 each will put us on easy street."

Had they been less interested in the work in hand they might have heard the sounds of oars in the rowlocks of a boat on the other side of the rocks.

La Belle Suzanne had come to anchor half a mile off the island, and Captain Barbier, being unable to see anybody aboard the small schooner in the cove, with the aid of his spy-glass, ordered a boat lowered and manned, and springing into it himself told his men to give way.

The boat shot up on the sandy beach, all hands got out, and leaving a couple of the men to stay by it, the skipper and two others, one of whom looked very like Tom Tucker, started around the rocks to see what, if anything, was going on on the other side.

Jack was pounding on the lock of the old chest and Sam was looking on with eyes ablaze with interest when Captain Barbier and his party came in sight.

They stopped in astonishment when they saw the two boys. Their inactivity lasted only a few moments.

The man who looked like Tucker uttered an ejaculation of rage and rushed forward, followed by the others.

Jack stopped and both he and Sam stared in consternation at the newcomers.

Our hero recognized Tucker at once, and his heart sank.

"So," said Tucker, for it was he, "you're the one who had the chart I came to Bill's house after, and you helped me search for it all the time, laughin' in your sleeve at me, eh? And you've come all the way here after it; but we've caught you in the nick of time," and he uttered his old chuckle, expressive of his satisfaction. "You've dug the treasure up and saved us the trouble. That was kind of you," he grinned, sardonically.

"How ees dis?" said Captain Barbier, comprehending that the chief object of their visit to the island had been to a certain extent forestalled by the two boys. "Dat ees ze treasure you spoke to me about, Tuckaire?"

"Yes, it is," said the sailor.

"Zen vat eet mean dat dese boys have dug heem oop? You informed me dat you are ze von only vat know about ze gold. Now we find two ozzaire person know eet too. You vill explain ze mattaire."

Tucker had made his way to the West Indies, and having once sailed with the Frenchman, looked him up and found him at Puerto Plata.

Then, on condition that he was to have half of the treasure if he pointed out the spot where it was hidden to the captain, he told his story, but admitted that he had lost the chart.

He said that he guessed his recollection of the directions would enable them to find it if the captain was willing to give the necessary time to the job.

The Frenchman agreed, as he was going over to Wolf Key anyway after turtles, and said that while his men were engaged in their regular occupation he and Tucker would make a try for the treasure.

So the sailor sailed with the captain the evening before on La Belle Suzanne, and they arrived just in time to put a stopper on Jack and Sam at the most interesting part of the business.

As Captain Barbier did not look pleasant, and he was not a man to be fooled with, Tucker hastened to explain the situation as he comprehended it.

"So, mon ami," said the skipper, looking fiercely at Jack,

"you keep ze chart dat belong to Tuckaire, and zen you try to play on heem ze march. By gar! you are von leetle rascal. Vat ve s'all do wiz heem, Tuckaire? T'row heem in ze sea to make ze shark hees dinnaire, or vat? I gif you ze revenge since he take of you ze advantage."

"Tie both of them until we take the chest aboard the Belle, then we can afford to let them go," said Tucker.

"Seize zem!" cried the skipper.

Tucker grabbed Jack and the other sailor nabbed Sam.

A couple of short pieces of tarred line were produced and the hands of the boys tied behind their backs.

Then Captain Barbier took Tucker aside.

"Zey haf a schoonaire. Eef we let dem go free zey vill sail somevaire and make ze charge dat ve haf robbed dem. Dat vill make for us some trouble, comprenez? Ze best vay vill be to keep dem prisonaire aboard ze Belle till ve s'all be ready to leave, den ve will sail for ze Barbados, sell ze turtle dere and lay our course for Havana, where ve vill turn ze gold and ozzaire treasure into good money. After zat ve s'all not care vat ze boys do. Dey vill get nossing from us."

"That suits me, cap'n," said Tucker.

"Ver' good. Now I vill gif dem de grand scare. Ve vill t'row dem into ze hole, fill dem in wiz ze sand to ze neck, and tell dem dat ees vat s'all be coming to zem. After ve get ze chest aboard ze schoonaire zen we dig zem out, and take zem aboard, too," grinned the skipper.

Tucker fell in with the idea and said they'd be scared to death.

"Now, you young rascals, ve haf decided to make of yu bot' ze example. Ve cannot afford to let you make off wiz yourselves. So ve feex you like ze buccaneer of ze time past would do to dem zey catch making free wiz zere propertee. We bury you oop to ze neck in ze hole you dig and leave you to die ven you get readee. How zat strike you, eh?"

"Oh, heavens, don't do that!" cried Sam, in a fright.

"Do you mean to murder us?" cried Jack. "Are you going to stand by and see us done up that way?" he added to Tucker.

"I have nothin' to say about it," replied the sailor. "Cap'n Barbier is the boss here."

"If he murders us you will be his accomplice. What did you do with your old shipmate, Bill Blunt? You killed him that night because he wouldn't give you the chart, or tell you where it was hidden."

"You're wrong, sonny, I didn't kill him. A couple of friends of mine carried him off to Rockland where we kept him prisone' till he admitted that he buried the chart in a tin box in th' trunk of a hollow tree in the wood behind the cottage. I went there and found that the tree had been struck by lightning and thrown down. The box was gone. When Bill heard it was missin' he went on like a wild man, and said there was somethin' important in it he didn't want lost. Figurin' that the chart was out of my reach for good I came down here relyin' on my memory to find the treasure. Now I find you here, which is a sign that you have the chart, and the dockyment Bill is wild over."

"I haven't got the chart, only a copy of it, and we got here largely by accident."

"What do you mean by accident?"

Jack told him in a few words how they came to leave the coast of Maine.

Tucker grinned and said something to the captain.

"Into ze hole wiz heem!" cried Captain Barbier.

He and his mate gave the boy a swing and flung him violently into the excavation.

"Dees vill teach heem to not monkey wiz vat do not belong to heem."

Jack made a desperate but vain effort to free his hands.

"Now ze ozzaire fellow!" cried the skipper.

Sam was thrown in beside his friend.

"Feel oop ze hole—quick!" ordered the captain.

The sailor of the turtle catcher caught up the shovel and began tossing the sand in around the boys, while Captain Barbier and Tucker watched the work in great delight, for they alone knew it was only a joke.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HURRICANE.

When the boys were buried to their waists, Captain Barbier called a halt.

"Dat vill do for ze present. We vill take ze chest aboard ze schoonaire, and ven ve come back ve s'all feenish ze job."

As a matter of fact, the captain did not intend to finish it, but to take the boys to his schooner and confine them in the

hold till he had captured a cargo of turtles and was about to make sail for the Barbados; then he meant to put Jack and Sam aboard their vessel and let them shift for themselves.

The three men got hold of the chest and carried it down to the water's edge.

"Go 'round and fetch ze boat," said the captain to his sailor.

The man obeyed orders, and inside of ten minutes he rowed the boat into the cove.

The boat belonging to the boys was not disturbed.

The old chest was handed into the La Belle Suzanne's boat, and with the two men rowing, and the skipper steering, off it went, the two dispirited boys watching it till it disappeared from their sight.

"That's the end of the treasure," groaned Sam, "and this is the end of us."

Jack was too discouraged to make any reply.

The sun had risen in the sky, but its heat was not as intense as usual.

A thick mist had come between it and the earth.

The horizon also had grown misty and uncertain.

There was also a strange, weird moaning in the air.

Something was apparently about to happen.

One of those sudden West Indian hurricanes was rushing down in that direction.

The first indications had passed unnoticed by the captain and his party, but his sharp eye made out what was on the tapis, and they rowed back to the schooner.

"Make has'e! Make has'e!" he cried, with energy. "Ve must get away at once or ve s'all go to ze smash. A hurricane ees coming."

Tucker and the other sailor bent to their oars.

The boat shot through the water toward the schooner, where the mate, aware of what was coming, had got the anchor started ready for hoisting aboard, and the sails reefed to the utmost extent.

As soon as the boat was alongside, Captain Barbier shouted for help to get the chest aboard and down into the cabin.

Then the anchor was weighed and the La Belle Suzanne began to work off the island.

"Zey must sheeft for zemselves," replied the captain. "We haf no time to go back now."

"Then they are as good as dead ones," said the sailor.

The skipper shrugged his shoulders and walked away to issue orders.

The air thickened so rapidly that Jack felt a heavy storm was coming.

He tugged at his bonds, and in a few minutes snapped them.

Then using his hands he dug himself out of the hole.

Drawing his pocket knife, he cut Sam free and helped him escape from the sand.

"There's a hurricane or something coming. We must get aboard the schooner quick," said Jack.

Hardly were the words out of his mouth before the hurricane burst upon the island with a terrible roar.

The sea rose and swept across the low part of the island from the north, and the palm and cocoanut trees bent half over.

The only thing that saved the boys was the shelter of the rocks.

The rowboat was carried away in a jiffy, and the schooner dragged seaward, anchor and all, where she was engulfed in the haze.

After that first rush the hurricane paused to take breath for the real business that was coming on hard and fast.

"What are we going to do?" said Sam, in a disheartened voice.

"Do? We must get around to that cave we discovered yesterday and take refuge in it. It's our only salvation. Come on."

Sam followed, and they rushed into the cave just as the hurricane struck the island in earnest.

Darkness, real and terrible, was now in the air.

The wind roared in a way the boys had never known before.

"The schooner is gone. We're marooned on this Key," said Sam.

"Things might have been worse with us. That rascally Frenchman intended to bury us alive. The hurricane saved us from that," said Jack.

"Then I hope he and his vessel goes down in it," said Sam, forcibly.

"He'll carry the treasure with him if he does."

"Don't mention that treasure. I'm heart-broken over it. Just to think that we had it in our hands and those rascals came upon us unawares and took it away. If that wouldn't make any one ill, I don't know what would."

"Yes, it was tough. I'll never see the word treasure in print after this but I'll have an attack of heart failure."

"I've read that there always is a curse on ill-gotten gold. It wasn't intended that we should have it. The fact that we almost had it begins to look like a pipe-dream. We didn't even have the pleasure of seeing what the treasure looked like."

"I'm glad we didn't, as things have turned out. If that box was full of costly gems, with a few bags of gold thrown in, and we had had a look in, we'd never have forgotten our loss as long as we lived."

"For all that, there is no doubt that the contents of the chest was very valuable."

"Don't let us talk about it any more. We have other troubles to think about. The schooner is probably at the bottom of the sea by this time. At any rate, we are not likely to see her again. Here we've got to stay till we're taken off. Probably some turtle-catcher will do that favor for us."

"How are we going to live in the meanwhile?"

"There are turtles' eggs in the sand, and maybe at a pinch we could catch a turtle."

"We might capture a turtle, but they are hard things to catch, particularly by inexperienced persons like ourselves. And if we caught one we'd have to kill it somehow and eat its flesh raw. I don't know whether we could do that."

"Cocoanuts and water for me," said Sam.

After a time they grew tired of talking and sat back and listened to the fearful uproar of the hurricane.

"It's a fine thing to have a rocky house around you in such a tempest," said Sam. "We know we are perfectly safe, and all the wind we can feel are the puffs which come in through the entrance yonder. This is as good as a cyclone cellar."

It was some time after noon, and the boys missed their mid-day meal.

As the afternoon passed away they grew hungrier.

There wasn't the slightest let-up in the hurricane.

If anything, it blew harder than ever.

The roar of the surf was ever in their ears.

"Suppose it keeps on like this for several days; we'll be too weak to climb a cocoanut tree. It takes a good climber to shin up them, anyway, for there is nothing to hold on to," said Sam.

"I don't think it will last over to-night. I've heard that these storms are shortlived, seldom lasting over twenty-four hours," replied Jack.

"I hope you're right about it. I wish it was over now. I'd give a whole lot for a drink of water. As for a cocoanut, it would be a feast."

Night came on and the air outside grew somewhat darker in consequence of the going down of the sun.

The boys dropped off asleep, and while they slept there came a lull in the storm.

The air suddenly became calm, as if the hurricane was over.

But it wasn't.

Those kind of storms move in a circle, with a calm center.

In a little while the other part of the circle hit the island and the uproar was resumed.

Sam woke up twice and Jack once during the night.

The storm was over by daylight, and the wind was blowing fresh.

The ocean, however, was in a great turmoil, and raised a tremendous surf on the north shore.

The sun was shining with its customary brilliancy when the boys left the cave.

They made a bee-line for the top of the rocks to quench their thirst.

Then they each began the difficult job of ascending a cocoanut tree.

Urged by their hunger, both managed to accomplish the feat.

They detached half a dozen nuts each and carried them to the front of the cave.

They dug out a hole in the top of the two nuts and took a long drink of the sweet milk they contained.

One of the nuts was broken open by a stone, and they feasted royally on the pulp inside.

They felt quite chipper after they had eaten all they wanted, but they knew this kind of fare would soon pall on their appetites.

They spent the day watching for a sail, an occupation that proved disappointing, as none came within their range of vision.

Late in the afternoon they found shellfish clinging to the rocks, and ate some, though it was unpalatable raw.

The moon came up an hour later than the night before, and

the boys sat on the shore in its full refulgence and talked over the great difference that twenty-four hours had made in their situation and prospects.

They retired to the cave to sleep, as sleeping in the moonlight was not considered just the thing to do.

That night Jack's sleep was visited by a strange dream.

Time seemed to have gone backward a matter of eighty years, and he was seated on the rocks looking down on the landing of a boat's crew of piratical rascals.

A large rakish schooner lay a quarter of a mile off shore.

The party took out a heavy chest rimmed with brass, and carried it into the cave.

Jack next appeared to be standing in the cave.

He saw the men dig a hole in the sand, a shallow one, deposit the box in it and cover it up.

As the ruffians marched out he was transported back to the top of the rocks.

He saw that it was low tide and the sun was rising above the skull rock.

One of the men got in line with the rock and the sun.

He and another man measured off a certain distance from the water's edge, while the rest of the party looked on laughing.

A longer distance was measured off to the east.

Two men got to work with shovels and dug a deep hole.

A second chest, bound with iron, and exactly resembling the one Jack and Sam had dug up, was brought from the boat.

It appeared to be quite light.

It was placed in the hole and the lid raised.

Jack saw there was nothing in it.

The shovelers began filling it with sand.

When it was nearly full the leader of the bunch locked the chest and threw the key into the sea.

Two other men took the shovels and covered up the box.

The party then re-embarked in their boat and returned to the schooner, which at once sailed away.

The burial of the box of sand appeared to Jack simply as a fake to possibly take attention away from the real treasure hidden in the cave.

Jack slept several hours after the vision faded, and woke up to find that another morning had come upon the world.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TREASURE OF THE OLD BUCCANEERS.

He recalled his dream distinctly, and instinctively looked at the end of the cave where he had seen the brass-bound box buried.

It was dark over there and he could not see much.

At that moment Sam woke up.

The first thing Sam said was "Let's eat."

While they were eating, Jack entertained Sam with the story of his dream.

Sam was greatly impressed by it.

"It would be a rich joke if that chest we dug up really contained only sand," grinned Sam. "What a setback those chaps would get when they opened it."

"Provided they survived the hurricane."

"Of course; but as that Frenchman looks like an old cruiser of these seas, I guess it would take more than one hurricane to do him and his craft up."

"If part of the dream represented an actual happening, why not the other part of it?"

"I guess it was. Let's look and see if we can find the box. We can dig with our hands, and as we have lots of time, and the sun won't bother us, why, we can afford to put in our morning that way as well as looking for a sail."

The boys entered the cave, and Jack pointed out the spot of his dream.

They got down on their knees and commenced to make the sand fly.

They had gone down about a foot when they felt something hard.

"There's something here, all right," said Sam, excitedly.

They speedily cleared the sand away from the top of a box which they felt was bound by some kind of metal.

"I believe we've got hold of the real treasure chest," said Sam, gleefully.

"I think so myself," said Jack. "But supposing it is, what can we do with it? We have no vessel to carry it away in. If we were to ask the skipper of a turtle-catcher he'd probably take it away from us."

"If we could make sure it's the treasure, we would hire a small vessel after we were carried to the nearest post and return for it."

"We have no money with which to hire one."

"We must knock the cover open, and if there is money in it we can carry away enough to raise the necessary funds."

"So we could," said Jack. "Run out and find a rock."

"I'll go down to the shore and look for the hammer and chisel you used on the fake chest."

Sam went out.

In a few minutes he came running back.

"There's a small steam-yacht flying the American flag heading for this island," he said.

Both boys rushed out and, standing on the rocks, signalled the approaching yacht with their arms.

The yacht ran close in and a boat was sent to the island.

"Take us off. We are marooned here," said Jack to the two men.

"We'll take you. Any water on this island? Our supply has run short."

"Lots of it. Come ashore, one of you, and I'll show you the spring."

The steersman got out and was shown where the water was bubbling up.

Ten minutes later Jack and Sam were received on board the yacht by the owner, a young millionaire.

While the former was telling their story, the mate went ashore with a barrel to fill it at the spring.

As soon as the barrel was hoisted aboard the owner was about to proceed, when Jack told him about the chest in the cave which he said he believed contained a pirate's treasure which they had discovered.

"I want you to fetch it aboard," said Jack.

The owner agreed to do so, and Jack went ashore with a boat and three men and pointed out the box.

It was pulled out of its hole, dragged to the boat and conveyed to the yacht.

The vessel then went on its way.

The yacht was bound for Havana.

Half way to Grand Turk Island they sighted a large schooner, which proved to be La Belle Suzanne, which had weathered the hurricane.

They passed close enough for the boys to recognize through a telescope Captain Barbier on deck.

The vessel was returning to Wolf Key.

"We got away just in time," said Jack to Sam.

"Bet your life we did. Now let's get the owner to have the chest opened so that we can see what's in it."

The box was opened and found to contain small bags of old Spanish gold, all of one size.

One of them was opened and counted, and contained the equivalent of \$5,000.

There were twenty of them, so the treasure was estimated to be worth \$100,000.

The boys received the congratulations of the owner, and they stayed aboard till the yacht returned to New York.

There they had the gold taken to the Sub-treasury and turned into good American banknotes, which in turn were turned into two drafts for about \$50,000, made out to the order of both boys on a Rockland bank.

They got a bang-up outfit of new clothes and returned to Bartown in style by rail, where they were received as back from the grave, for everybody believed they had met with some accident in the sailboat which had ended them.

Jack found Bill at the cottage with Ruby, he having turned up the day after the boys went on their involuntary cruise.

The boy surprised the old sailor with the story of the finding of the buccaneers' treasure, and he made it all right with Bill.

He and Sam having arranged to go into business in Rockland, the sailor was induced to go there, too.

Bill did not die for many years after Jack and Ruby were married, and before that both Jack and his young wife learned the contents of Bill's note.

It referred to a legacy belonging to the girl, which Bill had made use of to live on while hoping to get into condition to go after the treasure.

He was not called to account for it, as Jack and Ruby had all the money they wanted in the half of the treasure of the old buccaneers.

Next week's issue will contain "HITTING IT RICH; OR, THE LUCKIEST FIRM IN WALL STREET."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

William R. Hindman of Sedalia, Mo., who died at the age of eighty-two, had never sworn an oath in his life, never tasted intoxicating liquor, never chewed or smoked tobacco and was never sick until three days before his death.

Mrs. William Hatfield and Mrs. Blanche McDaniel, of Marion township, Shelbyville, Ind., have just completed cutting and shocking fifty acres of wheat on the Frank Bass farm. William Hatfield was unable to obtain help for the harvest and the women volunteered their services. The work was completed in three days. The women worked under the sweltering sun and were cheerful all the time.

A reward of \$100 has been offered by the United States for the arrest of Guillermo Rodriguez Aguinaldo, said to be the son of the former leader of the Filipino insurgents, when he was posted as a deserter from the United States Navy at Yerba Buena Naval Training Station. Young Aguinaldo, who is 24, enlisted at Salt Lake City on June 20, and was to have reported at Yerba Buena on July 1, but he has not arrived.

Archibald Thomas, a leper confined at the leper colony at Penikes Island, near New Bedford, Mass., will receive a license from the Navy Department as an amateur wireless operator, should he prove himself competent, and it is said there is no doubt he will. Thomas has learned wireless telegraphy by working with a poor equipment during the five years he has been a member of the colony. The radio inspector at Boston, who took up the matter of giving the license, will conduct his examination of Thomas by telephone.

The French army has constructed 135 miles of railroad across the Sahara desert and bored 600 wells, which have permitted the creation of extensive plantations of palm trees. At Taggurt alone there are two million palm trees. By sinking wells and irrigating the parched territory it is hoped to grow cotton and other produce, and thus gradually to extend the railway system in pursuance of a vast scheme which aims at traversing the Sahara and putting North Africa into railway communication with the Cape.

Albert Eggers, aged fourteen, of Rondout, N. Y., while dancing on the deck of the barge Flossie, fastened to a tow going down the Hudson River, tangoed overboard and was drowned in the Hudson River off Storm King the other day. He was the son of Captain Rudolph Eggers, the skipper. He had been dancing with his fifteen-year-old cousin, Helen Pawson, of Rockland Lake. While demonstrating some new steps to her and gyrating around he tripped over a spike, tumbled overboard and sank before aid could reach him.

John D. Rockefeller has had an automatic time safe installed in his mansion at Pocantico Hills, N. Y., for valuables of a particularly personal nature. No one but members of the family know what room it was placed in. Not even the servants were permitted to see where it was taken after it was unloaded at a rear door of the dwelling. As a further safeguard a secret alcove was constructed off one of the rooms and the safe was placed in that. Truckmen taking the safe to the premises were stopped by the small army of guards who swarm about the estate since the I. W. W. disturbances, and were not admitted until Mr. Rockefeller intervened in their behalf.

After less than twenty-four hours of quiescence, Lassen Peak, Cal., burst forth again in a stupendous eruption, the fourteenth in the series that began on May 30. No flames were seen, but the vast plume of blackened steam from the crater waved a mile high in the sky, and volcanic ash fell at Macomber Flats, thirteen miles distant. For a little less than half an hour the inverted cone of soaring gases maintained, sharply defined, the well-known volcanic outline. First from the mouth of the crater itself rose a vertical shaft of jet-black ash. As the shaft rose it mushroomed outward. The true volcanic nature of the eruption, as determined by J. S. Diller of the United States Geological Survey, was further emphasized by the strong stench of sulphur perceptible at Volta and at Viola, twenty-two miles down the wind to the north. Grave apprehension existed for the safety of a party of observers who left Warm Springs to visit the crater on Lassen Peak. No word has been received from them since the new outburst.

A British accessory manufacturer has attacked the automobile illumination problem in a brand-new manner. Instead of using four lamps, two of them high-power for touring and two much smaller for city driving, he provides no less than twelve small lamps, which are arranged in a row in the filler board between the wind shield and the top of the engine hood. During the time the lamps are not in use they are completely covered by a sliding shutter. For city driving only the two outside lamps are lighted. Where more light is required more lamps are lighted, and when the maximum illumination of the road is necessary, all of them are turned on. The most important feature of the arrangement, however, is that the angle of the group of lamps can be varied at the will of the driver so that any part of the road can be illuminated, sign posts can be shown up, or, on occasion, the reflectors can be shifted so that the light is turned down onto the engine for repairs at night. The lamps are shifted by a simple worm and gearing which is operated by a small hand-wheel upon the dash board of the car. Another advantage is that the row of lamps does not mar the outward appearance of the car as do the ordinary lamps.

LOST FOR ONE YEAR

OR,

ADRIFT ON A WATER-LOGGED SHIP

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XV (continued)

The trail made by the herd was a plain one, and they had no difficulty in making good headway, as the ground was perfectly level for the most part.

Occasionally a huge jack-rabbit would scamper across their path, and invariably when it happened Hal felt like taking a shot with his rifle.

But there was something else on hand just then, and there was no time for shooting game.

In due time the edge of the forest was reached, and then all hands began calling Archie's name.

But only the echo of their own voices came back to their ears.

"The herd of ponies must be close by," said Watkins. "They never hang out very deep in the woods. We will keep right on following the trail, as we have no time to stop and talk. Come on!"

He started resolutely ahead as he spoke, the others following close at his heels.

They had walked about a quarter of a mile into the woods when suddenly they came upon the herd. The ponies were gathered together in a little glade, many of them drinking from a brook.

But before our friends had a chance to look at them they scampered away in all directions.

Archie was not there.

"There is only one thing left for us to do now," said Sam.

"What is that?" asked the doctor, in a trembling voice. "Shoot off a gun. If he is within hearing, and is able to do so, he will answer it in the same manner."

Hal drew his revolver from his pocket.

"This ought to do," he remarked.

Sam nodded, so the weapon was discharged.

The echo of the report had scarcely died away when there came an answering shot from a point in the forest that could not have been over three hundred yards away.

With a yell of joy, Dr. Denton sprang forward to rush to the spot. His boy was close at hand, and he was anxious to meet him.

The rest started to follow him, and just as they did so a horde of hideous looking creatures, walking upright, appeared in the mazes of the undergrowth.

"The wild men!" cried Sam Watkins, with a ring of despair in his voice.

CHAPTER XVI.

UNDERGROUND.

Luckily for Archie Denton when he struck the ground he landed in a soft spot. The leaves had become piled up in that place and had partly rotted, thus making it not a bad place to fall upon.

The boy was on his feet almost instantly, and as quick as a flash he took a turn with the rope around a tree.

The galloping pony was thrown to the ground in a heap, and before he could recover, Archie was upon him.

"I'll tie your legs this time, old fellow," he said, and without any loss of time he proceeded to wind the rope about the forelegs of the little steed.

The fall had dazed the animal, and taking advantage of it, our daring young friend turned his attention to the hindlegs and bound them, also.

The capture of the pony was now complete, and, rising to his feet, Archie gave an exclamation of satisfaction.

"We must get him to the home of the Watkins' somehow," he muttered. "I wouldn't lose him now for anything. My! but wouldn't he be pretty if he was only clipped!"

The little horse was doing his best to get upon his feet by this time, but it was no use; he was tied hard and fast and Archie was his master for the present, anyway.

"I suppose it will take them some time to get here," observed the boy, as he got upon his feet and looked back the way he had come. "Lie still, Dashaway! You have fallen in good hands, if you only knew it."

He was just thinking whether it would be safe for him to run back and meet his companions and leave the pony where he was, when something happened.

A dozen or more hideous-looking beings that resembled men, to a certain extent, sprang from the bushes and surrounded him.

They were not baboons or apes—they looked to be more human than such as they—and they wore breech-clouts about their bodies after the fashion of South Sea Islanders.

Archie had forgotten all about the wild men the Watkins brothers had spoken of, in his excitement over the captured pony, and he was taken completely by surprise.

Boy as he was he did not forget the fact that he possessed a revolver, and he made a move to pull it from his pocket as soon as he recovered himself.

But before he could do so the strange beings sprang upon him and bore him to the earth.

The revolver was taken from him, and then the wild men proceeded to bind him with a flexible vine resembling that of the grape.

They chattered together in shrill, piping tones, and appeared very much elated over having captured the boy.

Archie was badly frightened, but not unnerved. He had a way of always looking on the bright side, and he felt that his companions would come and save him from the fiends.

But his heart fell a minute or two later when several more of them appeared on the scene, carrying two litters formed of skin and the tough boughs of trees.

They picked up the pony and deposited him on one of them, and then turned their attention to him.

He was placed flat on his back on the other litter, and then at a signal from one of the strange beings, who was evidently the leader, both the boy and the pony were picked up and carried off in the direction of the center of the forest.

A cold sweat broke out on the forehead of Archie, his tongue seemed to be paralyzed, and though he strove to shout for help he could not get a sound from his lips.

But he could think, just the same, and he was doing a whole lot of it.

No wonder the Watkins brothers had said it was not safe to go into the forest! These wild men were even more fierce in aspect than they had been painted. At least, that is the way the boy looked at it now.

They formed themselves into a sort of procession and marched for about a quarter of a mile, carrying the litters along as easily as though they had contained nothing.

There were four to Archie and eight to the pony. The latter did some struggling occasionally, but they saw to it that he did not roll from the litter.

Into a very dense part of the woods the procession came to a halt and deposited their burdens on the ground.

They were waiting for something—just what, Archie could not conjecture.

He noticed that some of them kept peeping through the bushes, and it struck him that they were lying in ambush for his father and the rest.

After what seemed to be a long while the captive boy was startled by the report of a pistol.

His heart gave a bound, for he knew his companions were coming to his rescue.

The wild men seemed to be as much startled as he was, and the one who had retained possession of the boy's revolver held it up and looked at it as though he thought the report had come from it.

As he did this his finger must have involuntarily pressed the trigger, for it was discharged, making what seemed to be an answering shot.

The next thing Archie knew the wild men had darted from the spot, and then came the sounds of a scuffle.

A number of shots rang out in rapid succession, and then part of the strange beings rushed to the spot where he and the pony lay and seized the litters.

Like a shot they darted off with their burdens, and then it was that the boy began shouting for help.

In less than ten seconds Archie found that he was being carried through almost total darkness. A few seconds later and he could not see a thing.

He kept on shouting for help, however, and as if in sympathy with him, the pony started to whinny, mournfully.

Sam Watkins had said the wild men lived underground, and the boy knew that must be where they were taking him now.

He felt as if he was going to his grave, and his last hope gave way. He fainted!

How long he remained in an unconscious condition he had no idea, but when he came to he found himself reclining on the ground, with the pony tied to a jutting piece of rock near him.

He could see this, because two or three blazing fires burned near by.

It was a big, cavernous sort of a place, and at least a hundred of the wild men were gathered there.

The pony's legs had been untied and he now appeared to be perfectly gentle.

Archie was pretty close to the animal's hind feet and he tried to squirm away.

As he made this move the pony gave a whinny and leaned his head toward him as though to lick his face. But the short tether would not permit this, even if it had been the intention of the horse, though the action caused a thrill of hope to fill the boy captive's breast.

At this juncture a number of the wild men approached, some of them beating upon rude, drum-like instruments.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE START TO THE RESCUE.

Though taken by surprise at the sudden appearance of the wild men in the woods, Hal and Lew did not forget how to act. The demon-like beings carried clubs that appeared to be large and heavy enough to dash out the brains of an ordinary man at one blow, and they did not mean to allow them to be tried on their heads.

They did exactly as they should have done, and opened fire with their revolvers.

Sam Watkins promptly joined in the fight, laying one low with a bullet from his rifle, and then using the weapon as a club in a masterful manner.

The doctor stood as though spellbound and did not join in the scrimmage till Hal shouted for him to do so.

The result was that the wild men were dispersed in a jiffy, leaving three of their number dead, almost at the feet of our friends.

They dodged behind trees, however, and showed that they had not given up the fight.

Their shrill cries were something fearful to hear, they sounded so unearthly.

"We must get to Archie!" cried Hal. "He cannot be far distant. It was certainly he who answered my shot."

(To be continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

FULL-BLOODED SIOUX BORN IN GERMANY.

The first full-blooded American Indian ever born in Germany has just seen the light of day near Dortmund, Westphalia. The child's father is a Sioux Indian from the Pine Ridge Agency, William Bear Shield, and the mother is Mary Bear Shield. The father is now in America, but the mother is a member of an Indian troupe touring Germany with a circus.

The birth took place in a typical American prairie wagon while the troupe was en route from Dortmund to Recklinghausen.

The mother was anxious that her little papoose, who is a girl, should be duly registered in the German records as an American citizen and a Christian. To that end she sought the nearest American consul, George Eugene Eager, who represents the United States at Barmen.

The baby was born on June 29, but as the Fourth of July was approaching, the baptism was deferred until then. Mr. Eager stood as godfather for the child, who was christened Maria Consula.

THE BIGGEST OF FLAGS.

What is said to be the largest American flag now extant has just been completed by the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company. It is 95 feet long, 50 feet wide and is designed to be flown from a pole 285 feet high. The bunting of which the flag is made was constructed especially for that purpose, was spun, woven and dyed under the roof of the Amoskeag plant.

The width of each of the thirteen stripes of the flag is slightly under 4 feet, and the stars on the blue field measure about 3 feet from point to point. The blue field measures 38 feet by 27 feet 5 inches. The stars alone weigh nine pounds, while the entire flag tips the scales at 200. The stars are placed 4 feet 9 inches between centers longitudinally and 4 feet 3 inches vertically.

The proportions of the flag are strictly in accordance with government regulations, and one important regulation—that of never letting the flag touch the ground—was fulfilled only after considerable difficulty in manipulation. The huge dimensions of the flag made it a difficult matter for the works to follow the last rule to the letter.

10,000-MILE TRIP FOR HALF-HOUR JOB.

The Lamport & Holt liner *Vauban* brought to port recently from Bahia, Brazil, an engineer who had just completed a 10,000-mile journey to do a repair job that required half an hour.

The traveler was William R. Sonricker, employed by the Carbondale Machine Company, of Pittsburgh, which has installed several refrigerating plants in Brazil and the Argentine.

Several months ago the company received a cable mes-

sage from the Rossbach Brazil Company, of Pernambuco, stating that its refrigerating plant had gone wrong and no one in Pernambuco could repair it.

Mr. Sonricker was sent at once to this city, where he boarded the *Vauban*, which landed him at Bahia, some 4,500 miles from here and 500 miles south of Pernambuco. He boarded a northbound coast steamship, which landed him at his destination.

He ascertained the trouble with the plant and made repairs within half an hour.

A dozen mechanics had taken the machinery apart three times before he arrived, but could not repair it.

Mr. Sonricker left Pernambuco in time to catch the *Vauban* on her northbound trip from Buenos Ayres. He thought the sea voyage of forty-eight days, covering 10,000 miles, was rather excessive for a half-hour repair job.

CONCRETE DWELLINGS.

Some time ago Thomas A. Edison, the inventor, predicted that the home of to-morrow would be "of reinforced concrete; substantial, sanitary, attractive and everlasting." It would be a "poured house."

The poured house became a reality. A government architect perfected it through an ingenious invention of steel forms, which are set up, forming the walls, partitions, floors and roofs into which the concrete is poured. The first concrete town was built at Virginia Highlands, near Washington, D. C. Now a second one has been constructed at Nanticoke, Pa., near some great coal mines. This group of buildings is considered one of the most interesting of the age.

There are forty houses at Nanticoke, grouped in pairs. Wooden forms were first employed in the construction of concrete buildings. By the use of steel forms, the economy is apparent. The forms can be used over and over—hundreds of times, if need be. The Nanticoke buildings are of the two-family, seven-room type. The walls, partitions, floors and stairs are of concrete, the only wood-work being the window sashes and doors. One thing in favor of the poured house is that continual repairs are not necessary. The sanitary character of the houses is also to be taken into consideration. If necessary the whole building can be easily scrubbed and flushed out with a hose. No insurance is necessary, as the houses are absolutely fireproof. The Nanticoke buildings were erected at moderate cost and are rented to the employees of the coal company for \$8 a month.

From four to six days are required for pouring the average concrete house. Concrete has long been used in the construction of large buildings, but the great drawback to building concrete houses was the cost. The cost has been reduced by the use of the steel forms. A mixture of coal, cinders, sand and cement was used in the Nanticoke houses.

THE SILVER WHEEL

—OR—

THE LIGHTNING LEAGUE OF LYNN

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER V (continued)

Half way along, a big dog rushed out from a farmyard and flew at Jack's legs, and only by rapid riding was he able to save himself from being bitten.

The brute came at Jack again, and the boy saw that matters looked serious, for he was unable to shake off the animal. Then he recollects that he had a wrench in his pocket, for he had been tightening a nut a short time before and had forgotten to put it back in his tool bag.

Now he took it hastily from his pocket, and, as the furious animal sprang at him, he let go of the handle-bar with his right hand, in which he grasped the wrench, and dealt the dog a blow that sent it reeling back into the dusty road. There it lay howling.

"Hooray!" cried Ned. "That's giving it to him in the neck."

"And where you'll get it, too!" said a man, savagely. He was probably the owner of the dog, and was standing near a buggy which stood at the entrance to the farm-yard.

"Serves the dog right!" shouted Jack. "You shouldn't keep such fierce animals."

"Go and hoe potatoes!" cried Ned, laughingly.

The last taunt was evidently too much for the angry farmer, for he sprang into his buggy, seized the reins and lashed the horse, and instantly the animal dashed off down the road in pursuit of the two wheelmen.

So suddenly was this done that the buggy was almost on Ned before he realized what was happening, and the farmer, reaching out towards him, cut at him furiously with his whip, the thong just missing the boy's cheek.

This was quite enough to induce Ned to show how he could ride, and a desperate spurt enabled him to catch up to Jack, who had been about ten yards ahead.

"He's after us, Jack!" shouted Ned.

"Chase yourself!" cried Jack, turning round and looking at the farmer. "You can't catch us!"

The man, however, showed no signs of giving up the race, and he yelled to his dog to join him, but the animal seemed to take no further interest in the proceedings, still feeling the effects of the blow Jack had given it.

The red barn was passed now like a flash, the boys not making a remark as they did so. This was to have been the finishing post for the race proposed by Jack Hudson, but it was quite forgotten now and on they went, the

buggy at their heels, with its angry occupant vowing vengeance when he caught them.

"That horse can go!" exclaimed Ned. "Wonder how much longer this is going to last?"

"I like it," cried Jack. "It's great. Hello! what's that ahead of us?"

"A wagon; it's right across the road, too. We're caught."

"Guess that doesn't worry me," said Jack. "We'll stand our ground and give our agricultural friend more than he bargains for."

"We can't spare the time."

"Time! it won't last more than one round."

"But our wheels may get smashed in the row."

"Gracious! but that's so. We can't afford to have that happen. We must pass that wagon. There's a couple of feet between the end of it and the fence, that ought to be enough. I'm going to make a dash for it. Hooray!" shouted Jack. "I'm through!"

"Stop them! Stop them!" cried the farmer, as Ned attempted to follow. "They've killed my dog, and I'll have them arrested!"

Ned went by, too, but so close was he to the wagon that his handle-bar grazed it.

This was the end of the pursuit, for before the wagon could be moved to enable the buggy to pass, the two boys were more than a quarter of a mile ahead, and the farmer turned round and drove off home.

"We must have come five miles," said Ned.

"I hope it hasn't done you any harm, Ned," replied Jack, anxiously. "I shall feel badly about it if it has."

"Why, I enjoyed it!" cried Ned, "and even if I did happen to be exhausted I shouldn't think of blaming you, old fellow, you couldn't have acted differently. The dog tried to bite you, and you only gave it what it deserved."

They took a short rest about twelve o'clock, when they had dinner, but were on their wheels again without any unnecessary loss of time, not making such rapid progress as they had done in the morning, for the roads were heavy with dust.

"One consolation is," said Jack, "that it's the same for the others."

"If they come this way. Mind, they're not bound to do so. There's more than one way to Redfield. Let's hope the other roads are worse."

With this charitable thought in their minds, the two

boys arrived at Redfield late at night, completely exhausted. They would have gone to bed at once in the only hotel the place contained, but Joe King happened to be there, and he detained them for a few minutes, giving them news of the race.

It seemed that Leslie Ware was still leading, and that there were only eight competitors in the race, one of them having retired on reaching Warren. Joe left them, intending to go right on to Fort Wayne, in Indiana, where his sister and Sadie Brooks were waiting for him.

"Nothing from Larry Connor?" said Ned. "That's strange."

"Not at all. No news is good news, my boy," cried Jack, merrily. "Let us go to bed."

CHAPTER VI.

NED IS A PRISONER—LARRY CONNOR'S STORY.

Jack was the first to wake up, and he dressed himself quietly without rousing Ned.

"Let him sleep on; he needs it," said Jack.

Going downstairs, he saw the landlord standing at the door talking to a stranger, who went away quickly when he noticed Jack walking towards him.

"Say, boss," said the landlord, "maybe this is for you."

"What is it?"

"A telegram. It's for Jack Hudson."

"Let me have it. That's my name."

Jack anticipated that the message was from Larry Connor before he tore it open, and he perused it eagerly.

"Meet me at Medina at seven o'clock," said the telegram, and it was signed "Connor."

"How far is Medina from here?" asked Jack.

"You can ride there in an hour, mister."

"Guess I'll go there at once," muttered Jack. "It's six o'clock now, so I haven't any time to spare."

Sitting down, he scribbled a few lines to Ned, telling him he had gone on to Medina, at which place he would wait for him.

"Give this to my friend when he wakes up," said Jack. "But if he isn't out of bed in one hour from now go and wake him."

Jack got on his wheel and rode off, and as soon as he had gone the stranger, who had previously been talking to the landlord, came back for an instant.

"You'll do it?" he said, questioningly.

"You bet I will. It's very easy now the other chap has cleared out."

When Ned woke he was surprised to find that Jack had gone, but he understood the reason when he had read the letter his chum had left behind, and he proceeded to dress himself quickly. Having done so he went to the door, but it would not open, and the key which had been inside on his going to bed was no longer there.

Ned became quite annoyed, and began to kick loudly at it, thinking the noise would bring the landlord upstairs, and then, as he did not come, the boy shouted loud enough to wake the dead. Not a sound came in response, and

from being angry Ned grew alarmed, for he saw Leslie Ware's hand in what was happening.

"I'm locked in," he cried. "Ah! it's a plot to delay me. I understand it all now. This scoundrel here must be in Ware's pay. Never mind, there's a window I can get through, so they've had all their trouble for nothing."

The room was an attic, and the window was a small, circular aperture not more than eighteen inches in diameter, and Ned threw it open instantly and looked out. He was delighted with what he saw.

"I can drop from here to the shed below," he said, "and from there to the ground. It's dead easy."

But then he gave a groan and sank back on the bed.

"I'm beaten!" he gasped.

He had his bicycle in the room, having brought it upstairs with him the night before, so as to be sure that nothing would happen to it, and he saw how impossible it was to pass a twenty-eight-inch wheel through an eighteen-inch window.

"I must break down the door!" cried Ned, springing up from the bed and rushing at it. "I'll kick it to pieces."

But this did not prove an easy task, either, for the door was lined with iron, the room having at one time been used for storing valuable property belonging to the former proprietor.

So, baffled again, Ned rushed to the window, expecting to see some one pass, and he must have been looking out for more than an hour when the first traveler came his way. He hailed him immediately, told him he was locked in, and asked him to stir up the landlord, who was probably asleep.

After a time the man told him he could do nothing.

"The place is fastened up tight," he shouted. "And I can make no one hear. Sorry for you, mister, guess you'll have to wait patiently till the old man comes back."

And on he went, leaving Ned in a worse frame of mind than ever. As the house lay back some distance off the main road no one else came near it, and the nearest house was two hundred yards away. Ned shouted, but evidently the sound of his voice did not reach there, for no help arrived.

Then, about ten o'clock, Ned, to his delight, saw Jack Hudson scorching along towards the hotel, and just as he arrived, who should make his appearance but the landlord himself. Seeing Ned at the window he looked up and burst out laughing.

"Sakes alive!" he cried. "Well, but that's funny, boss. Say, I forgot all 'bout you being in that room, and by gosh! I just went and locked the door. I'll run right up and let you out."

Ned gave the landlord a piece of his mind, but the old man protested that what had happened was due to pure forgetfulness on his part. When Jack heard Ned's story, he had a word to say, too, but he soon saw that it was simply a waste of time to shout at this old man. Ned jumped on his wheel, and Jack did the same, after having bestowed a last look, full of anger, on the landlord.

The latter watched the two boys as they went down the road, seemingly being quite amused by his thoughts.

(To be continued)

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Ed Kasinger, a young farmer on the North Fork, Ark., caught a twenty-pound catfish with his hands on the Nettle Bottom shoal on the North Fork recently. He was on the bank and saw the fish splashing, making its way into a deep pond above. The water was about eight inches deep and very swift, and before the fish had time to turn and go back downstream Kasinger was struggling with it. He finally managed to get it out on the bank.

For some time the Italian boy scout organization, called the "Young Explorers," has been spreading rapidly. It is much favored by parents as giving open-air exercise to young boys, which has been rather wanting. The movement will now doubtless assume much larger proportions, as King Victor Emmanuel, in receiving the head scout master announced that he wished the Crown Prince to be enrolled as a scout. The Prince is nearly ten years old and is very active. It is hoped that he will later be allowed to camp with other scouts.

John Reerink, son of Tony Reerink, was attacked and bitten on the ear by a skunk while asleep under a tree near the home of Steve Smith, north of Haskell, Okla. The animal was choked from its hold and killed. The Reerinks, father and son, were building a barn for Smith and were sleeping in a tent in the yard. During the night the son became warm and moved his blanket beneath a nearby tree. Some time later, while half asleep, he felt

something touch his blanket. He brushed at the spot, thinking that a bug had disturbed him. A second later a skunk fastened its teeth in his ear. The father answered his son's cries and choked the animal. Reerink spent the rest of the night in the creek.

Ten thousand men are now on strike at the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, and the trouble may spread to other army and navy factories. The origin of the dispute was the case of a fitter named Entwhistle, who was asked to erect a machine on a concrete bed laid down by non-union laborers during a building dispute. The fitter answered that he would do this only if a guarantee were given that never again would union men be asked to complete work begun by non-union men. Sir Frederick Donaldson thereupon dismissed Entwhistle, and by Saturday afternoon 7,000 men had "downed tools." These will be joined later on by 3,000 more, leaving only a few hundred non-union men in the arsenal. The strike committee issued instructions that all men engaged under the direct supervision of Sir Frederick Donaldson must be dismissed. This demand includes all employees in the royal laboratory, the royal carriage department, the royal gun factory, and the mechanical engineering department. If this has no effect, the men in the army ordnance department, the naval ordnance department and the government factories at Enfield, Pimlico and Waltham Abbey will be asked to stop work.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

August Novak, a Passaic, N. J., "white wing," has inherited a \$25,000 estate in Germany, but will continue to sweep streets, he says. An uncle died several months ago and named Novak his sole heir. The German consul transmitted to Novak \$500 as the first installment of his money. Novak had been supporting a family of six on \$1.50 a day.

The United States is richer than any other two nations. The two richest nations after our own are Great Britain, \$75,000,000,000; France, \$50,000,000,000, making, together, \$125,000,000,000. The wealth of the United States is \$135,000,000,000; giving it a considerable excess over Great Britain and France combined. The wealth of Germany is very near that of France—\$49,000,000,000.

"I am willing to wager \$5,000 that I will find any address in London, without the aid of a taxicab or guide, by walking and using only motor omnibuses, almost as quickly as any man who has his sight." This was the claim made by Philip E. Layton of Montreal, who has been blind for forty-one years, in the discussion which followed his paper on pianoforte tuning as a profession for the blind at the International Conference on the Blind at the Church House, Westminster. In spite of the increased traffic and the motor car, Mr. Layton said, it was easier for a blind man to get about London to-day than it was twenty-five years ago.

Indeterminate jail sentences for drunken husbands who maltreat their wives and children are a reform in the penal code urgently recommended by the Federated Women's Societies of Germany. At a meeting held in Berlin, the societies decided to petition the government to this end. Several speakers stated that there was no other way to combat the danger to the lives and morals of drunkards' families. It is proposed that drunkards shall be kept under arrest as long as there is any probability that they would abuse their liberty by committing further excesses. Inebriates who have been placed in institutions for treatment should not, it is declared, be released until undoubtedly cured.

Her pet dog leaping against her in play caused Mrs. Charles H. Tastener, of Nutley, N. J., to lose her balance and fall to her death in the old Belleville quarry the other day. The dog tried to follow her over the brink, and his cries brought help. Mrs. Tastener, who was fifty-three years old, was out to give her pet an airing. She was walking along the top edge of the quarry and the force of the dog as he bounded against her pushed her over. She fell eighty feet. Her skull was crushed and she was instantly killed. Though her body fell short of the water in the pit, the rescue party was forced to lower a rowboat with ropes. Then men, let down by the ropes, rowed the body across to a point only sixty feet from the top. From there the body was pulled up with ropes.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

"There's no coal, mum," said Bridget, "and the fires are going out." "No coal! Why didn't you tell me before?" "I couldn't tell you there was no coal, mum, when there was coal," answered Bridget.

"Of course," said one old farmer to the other, "your boy is learnin' Latin and Greek at college, but is he gettin' anything practical?" "Oh, yes. In the last letter he writ he tells me he is takin' lessons in fencin'."

In the Kitchen. First Burglar—I'm sorry for dese folks. Second Burglar—Oh, I guess dey can stand de damage. First Burglar—Tain't dat. But I'm sorry for people wid a cook dat makes sich plum puddin' as dis.

"Mr. Showman," said an inquiring individual at the menagerie, "can the leopard change his spots?" "Yes, sir," replied the individual who stirs up the wild beasts; "when he is tired of one spot, he goes to another."

Sunday School Teacher (illustrating the "still, small voice")—What is it, dear children, that makes you feel so uncomfortable and unhappy after you have done something which you ought not to do? Dear Child—A lickin'.

"Why are yez decorating, Mrs. Murphy?" "Me b'y Denny is coming home the day." "I thought he was sent up for foive years." "Yes, but he got a year off for good behavure." "Sure, it must be comfortin' for yez to have a good b'y like that."

Three different waiters at an hotel asked a prim, precise little man at dinner if he would have soup. A little annoyed, he said to the last waiter who asked the question: "Is it compulsory?" "No, sir," said the waiter; "I think it's mock turtle."

Mrs. Green (who thinks of hiring)—But is she honest? Can she be trusted? Mrs. Brown (the girl's former mistress)—You need not be in the least alarmed. She is perfectly honest. All the time she was with me I never knew her to take a thing—not even my advice as to how things should be done.

THREE VISITS FROM THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

By Paul Braddon.

From the day I set foot on the deck of the good ship Bardwell, sailing from Boston around Cape Horn, I heard of the Flying Dutchman. As a boy I believed in all the yarns, but by the time I was out of my apprenticeship I came to take these stories for what they were worth. I am going to tell you, however, that I really saw as mysterious a craft as the traditional ghost ship, and that if my eyes were deceived, so were the optics of a whole ship's company.

In April, 1868, I was mate of an English whaling bark called the Lord Rossmore, Captain Pierce McConnell, and we were off the mouth of the Amazon. We had been out three months, and were having a big run of luck. The weather seemed to be made for our special benefit. There was day after day of good working winds and smooth seas, and there was no day in which we did not sight whales. On the day of which I wish to speak particularly we had killed two fine whales, and by evening both were alongside, and the sea was as calm as a mill-pond. We should have begun the cut-in process at once, but the decks were not yet clear of the last whale, while the men were so worn out that they clamored for a night's rest.

The barometer was high, the sea smooth, and the captain issued orders for all the men to knock off. This meant that the off watch should have their bunks, while the on watch could sleep on deck while on duty. There wasn't wind enough to drift us, and consequently we had no fear of any vessels except steamers, and they would hardly run us down on such a clear night that our ship could be seen a mile away. I own up that as soon as the vessel grew quiet I went to sleep on my post; and that I slept for a long hour. When I awoke it was with a chill of apprehension. I felt that something was very wrong, and at once inspected the decks from stem to stern. The men of my watch were stretched out here and there, all fast asleep, and everything seemed all right. We had a whale on either side, and they were riding buoyantly, while half a dozen sharks were tearing at their rough hides. Our night lights were all right, everything safe from fire, and I called myself a fool for thinking that anything was wrong. Nevertheless, I continued worried and nervous, and the desire to sleep left me entirely.

It might have been half an hour after my awakening, and I was softly pacing the deck, taking in its whole length, when a large, square-rigged ship, with every sail set, and seeming to draw, came out of the darkness to the northeast. She had a bone in her teeth, and her hull was careened over two or three streaks by the pressure of the wind, and for the moment I forgot where I was and the circumstances which surrounded me. The ship stood down to pass under our quarter, and I never took my eyes off her for an instant. She came swiftly, but there was a ghost-like movement that sent chills over me. As if she were a real ship, and as if a genuine top-sail breeze were blowing, on came the stranger, and as she was within a cable's length she shifted her helm a bit and the two craft were broadside on for a moment. There were twenty-

five or thirty men at the ship's port rail watching us in true sailor fashion, and on the quarter-deck I saw the captain surveying us through his night glasses. I could see that he was an old man, having long white locks and a long white beard. Why, sir, I would stake my life on what I saw, though it would be useless to try to make you believe it.

Just as the stern of the ship was passing me her captain raised his hand as if the motion accompanied an order, and there was a rush of the men to execute it. Sail was taken in while you could snap your finger and the helm was put down, and the ship came into the wind. She wasn't a stone's-throw away then, and my eyes were still on her, when some one behind me hoarsely exclaimed:

"Heavens, Mr. Merwin, but did you ever see the likes of it?"

I turned to find one of the men behind me. I turned from him again to the strange craft, and she was gone! It took me two or three minutes to realize that there was no wind and no sea, and that no ship could have maneuvered as she did, and then I asked of the man:

"Jones, what did you see?"

"I got a chill, sir, though it's warm enough, as we all know, and awoke to find you looking off at the water. As I stood on my feet I saw the ship, and I was right behind you when she shortened sail and came up."

"And where is she now?"

"Gone, sir! That's a ghost ship, sir, and we are in for bad luck."

I could have kicked myself for believing in what I saw. I went after the glasses, and just as I got them the lashings holding the whale on the port side gave way with a great crash, the bark keeled over to starboard with the weight of the other fish, and as she rocked back the other lashings parted, and we ran to the rails, port and starboard, in time to see the whales sink out of sight. The whole crew were aroused, and the captain stormed in a terrible way, but as no one was to blame no one could be censured. Next day it was known through the ship that the Flying Dutchman had been sighted, and strangely enough, there was not a skeptic. The captain made me relate the details twice over, and then he ordered sail on the bark and we stood down the Brazilian coast for 150 miles. The whales had suddenly left us, and it was exactly nine days before the cry of "There she blows!" was heard again. We lowered for a forty-barrel whale and got him, and our old-time enthusiasm returned. We had got him tried out and the decks cleaned up when it came on a calm, quiet night again. The men had had a long rest, and every one of the watch was wide awake, when, at about eleven o'clock, with everything quiet below and aloft, the lookout suddenly called:

"There's a big ship close aboard of us on the starboard bow!"

Every man sprang up, and we all rushed forward in a body, and there, plain as a lighted lamp at midnight, was a big ship bearing down upon us and only a cable's length away. Not one of us remembered that it was a dead calm, and we yelled out in chorus to attract the stranger's attention. He held for us until I could see the sparkle of cop-

per under his forefoot, and then a shift of the helm sent him along our broadside, and the performances of the previous occasion were repeated. He went out of our sight after rounding to, and by that time our captain was on deck. He questioned every man separately, and all told the same story; and later on, as he stood with me on the quarter, he said:

"Mr. Merwin, that's bad luck again. It may mean something more than losing a whale."

Next day we raised a whale and he stove two boats and killed three men, and it was eleven days after that before we raised another. On the night of the tenth, with all the men in my watch wide awake, and the ship drifting off before a gentle breeze, the ghostly visitor came out of the darkness again, ran us past from stern to stem this time, and was seen as plainly as before. Next day we raised three whales at once. Down went three boats, the captain leading. I killed my whale almost at once. The other boats made fast and were run off, and from that day to this have never been heard of. We saw the stranger no more after that. Had he appeared once more I believe that every man of the crew would have leaped into the sea and sought death by drowning."

SEA MYSTERIES.

In the year 1861 I was mate of a brig called the Henry and William, sailing between San Francisco and the Sandwich Islands. She was a small, snug vessel, a fast sailer, and the captain was William Lansing. He and his brother Henry were the owners, and the brig was named after them. Just at daylight one June morning, in the year I have mentioned, while we were 30th miles from the islands, a schooner was sighted dead ahead. We had a fair breeze over the starboard quarter, and the schooner had all sail set, and was making good progress. Sails were not an unusual sight on that route, and we gave the stranger little attention until we found that we were overhauling her. She was exactly on the true course to the islands, and we were therefore in her wake. She was hull down when we first discovered her, but by the time we had washed down and breakfast had been served she was not over two miles ahead. There were some smart schooners flying in that trade, and the fact of our outsailing this one so handsomely put us all in good spirits. We were humming along after her at nine or ten knots an hour, when she suddenly came up into the wind in the most lubberly fashion, shivered there for a moment, and then breached to and was driven off before the wind sideways.

As soon as I saw the schooner in trouble I seized the glass and ran half way up the foreshrouds, and it wasn't a minute before I made the discovery that her decks were entirely clear of men. At this hour of the morning both watches should have been on deck, but not a sailor was visible. This was an unheard-of occurrence, but, as she had no signal of distress flying, and stood too high in the water to have been abandoned for a leaking vessel, I could hardly credit my vision. I looked again and again, examining every foot of her decks, but it was a plain fact that not a living person was in sight. I reported the matter

to the captain, and by that time we were so close aboard that all our crew could note the condition of things with the naked eye. One ship's bell was rung, and the men shouted in chorus, but nothing came of it. It was then determined to board her, and, as the brig was laid to, I went off with three men in the yawl, and was soon at the stranger's side.

I had expected to meet with some shocking sight, but was disappointed. The decks were free and passably clear of raffle. Some of the coils had fallen off their belaying pins, and I could see at a glance that the decks had not been washed for several days, but aside from this I could detect nothing ~~of~~ of the way. The scuttle was drawn over the forecastle entrance and bolted. My first action was to open this, and the rush of air told me that the forecastle had not been ventilated for several days. Seizing a capstan bar which leaned against the anchor windlass, I pounded smartly on the deck and called out to know if anybody was below, but no answer came.

The next point for inspection was the cabin. I went down alone, and in two or three minutes was satisfied that it had no occupants, living or dead. There was no disorder—no sign of haste or plunder. I was sniffing the air as I moved about, and I could detect no odor to prove that an epidemic had raged. When I went on deck the brig was within speaking distance, drifting at the same pace as the schooner, and I informed Captain Lansing of the state of affairs and sent the boat to bring him over. When he came we descended into the forecastle and lighted the lamp. There was plenty of oil in it, proving that some hand had turned out the light in the usual way. We then went to the cabin. Everything appeared as if the officers had simply gone on deck, except that there was not a single article of wearing apparel. This was likewise true of the forecastle. We looked for the schooner's log, but it was gone, as also were her papers and charts.

Our inspection and investigation lasted three hours, at the end of which time we were no wiser than when we began. Here was a stanch, tight schooner picked up in mid-ocean with all sail set. Those who had abandoned her had taken the utmost precaution that she should not be identified, but for what reason we could not even conjecture. Here was a lump of salvage for us worth looking after, and Captain Lansing determined to take her to the islands. We hadn't an extra man on the brig. Indeed, we were one short of our complement. We had therefore determined to take a tow line to the brig and hang by her at least while the weather was safe, and had begun our preparations, when an "ox-eye" or squall was seen gathering down in the south, and we had to hurry aboard the brig to make all snug. The squall hit us fiercely, and lasted nearly half an hour, and when we came out of it the schooner had turned turtle within half a mile of us, and the prize had slipped from our grasp.

Did we ever learn anything further about her? Not a word, singular as it may seem. The incident was published in scores of papers, and called to the attention of thousands of sailors, but none of them was ever able to furnish any true information. What do I think? Well, it was one of the mysteries, but no stranger than some others I have had a hand in.

NEWS OF THE DAY

Charles Bauer, of Dutchess Junction, N. Y., aged twelve, is recovering from the effects of an operation for the removal of a button which was stuck in his nose for ten years unbeknown to himself or his parents. When Dr. Albert Breck operated he found a button lodged there.

A new phase of the alleged faulty construction of a \$52,000 road between Nevada and Wyandot, O., arose at a hearing before the board of review recently when farmers testified they had to stop raising chickens, as they would go on the road, get stuck in the tar and then be run over by autos.

While digging for mussels near Evansville, Ind., Clyde Hosse found a crawfish caught in a rock in such a way that it could not be released alive. The rock was hollow and had a small opening. The fish probably crawled inside while small and remained there until it grew too large to escape.

Charles Webber, a demented stranger, was arrested in Cheyenne, Wyo., while prowling in an alley. When he was searched at headquarters \$1,008.65 in currency and coin was found scattered through the pockets of his shabby clothing. His mind had become unbalanced while en route from Coalville, Okla., to Los Angeles, Cal.

At a Sunday-school picnic at the Methodist Church, Salina, Kan., there was a cake served which was made by Mr. John H. Bell of this city. There were 450 people present and the cake was sufficiently large that every one at the picnic had a good-sized piece of it. The cake was three feet across the top and required four dozen eggs.

After an absence of thirteen years Charles Able returned to his home near Roundhead, O., and met and discussed crops with his father, John Able, without being recognized. It was only when his mother entered the room that the young man's identity was revealed. The elder Able met his son on his way back from the mailbox near his home, and invited him into the house. "Perhaps there will be a letter from Charles." Mr. Able remarked as he left the house. Charles Able has been in Summit, Ore.

A pet black cat probably saved the home of Patrolman William Florence, of Portland, Ore. from fire recently. Florence went to bed about 12:30 o'clock. He had been asleep a short time, when the cat jumped upon the bed and began scratching him. Florence sat up and sniffed. He scented smoke and ran down the back stairs to find a brisk fire blazing along the side of the kitchen wall. He extinguished the blaze with water from the hot water tank and a bucket. Florence says the cat often calls him when strange people come to the door.

A hurricane, accompanied by a heavy fall of hail, swept over the vicinity of Marathon, Tex., one Sunday afternoon recently; following the hail the rain fell and considerable damage is reported from the surrounding country. Growing crops were badly beaten down. At the O. T. Ward ranch in the Glass Mountains, north of Marathon, 250 goats were beaten to death by the hail.

The life of an ordinary civilian is too tame for Charles Schultz. He served in Uncle Sam's army thirty years, rising from camp cook to quartermaster. Just prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Mexico Quartermaster Schultz was retired on a pension and hoped to live the rest of his life in quiet. While visiting his old home in Racine, Wis., he developed an uneasiness that rapidly grew into a perpetual fidgety demeanor and he informed his brother, Louis Schultz, that he could stand the humdrum of the life of leisure no longer and was going to re-enlist and join his regiment, the Twenty-third Infantry, at Vera Cruz. He left on the following Thursday.

About two or three months ago a couple of drovers came to Chatham, N. C., with about fifty or sixty unbroken horses and sold them to the farmers and others. They were as wild as could be, none of them ever having had a bridle put on them. Nearly all of them were soon broke to work to harness, but one or two managed to escape from their owners and make for the tall timbers. One of them was soon caught, but the other one was too wild and has refused to be taken into captivity again. He has afforded several of the citizens around here lots of long chases and any amount of fun. One man living in the country shot at him several times and tried to kill him, as he was destroying the farmer's corn and oats. The pony is not dead yet nor has he, at last accounts, been caught, although a party spent part of a day recently trying to catch him.

Kansas City is to have a ten-story office building which will be devoted entirely to business women. No men will be allowed to rent space in the building. The building is to be erected by the Woman's Commercial Club, and a woman capitalist whose name has not been made public will finance the undertaking. The site has been practically selected, but its location has not been made public, as the women do not wish the price on the lot to advance before they can close the deal. The building will be designed by a woman architect, with a special view to the accommodation of women. The agent of the building will be a woman, the janitors will be women, the elevators will be operated by girls, and girls will be employed as porters. Office girls instead of boys will be employed by the tenants and male stenographers need not apply. One man has asked for an office in the building, declaring that he wanted it because he knew it would be kept clean, but his request has been refused.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

A NEW RHODES PLAN.

With the object of giving to Oxford University a new contingent of American students every year, the Rhodes Trustees announced a change in the method of electing scholars. Instead of, as hitherto, choosing from the forty-eight States in two consecutive years and skipping the third year, the scholars will be chosen yearly in future from two-thirds of the States.

The sixteen States to be omitted at the 1916 examinations are Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia and Wyoming.

From those States scholars will be selected in 1917, when sixteen other States will be omitted.

GRIT OF A SHARPSHOOTER.

During the siege of Lucknow in the Indian mutiny there was afforded what was probably the most notable instance of the record in war of a crack shot.

The rebels were endeavoring to mount two eighteen-pounders, which they had hauled up to the flat roof of one of the palaces surrounding the residency, and it was necessary to prevent this being done, or they would have been able to pour down a heavy fire on the defenders. Sergeant Halliwell was chosen for this duty. He was a crack shot of the Thirty-second foot.

Being given the best rifle that could be found, his orders were to prevent the guns being mounted. He took up his position behind some battered-down masonry where there was only cover for him to lie at full length. He remained in that position, it is said, for several days, not being able to stand, inasmuch as that would have resulted in instant death. His only change was to roll over from his back to his stomach. His eyes were ever kept on the dismounted guns, and whenever the Sepoys attempted to mount them his unerring rifle played havoc among them and prevented their object being accomplished. Food was brought to him at night by men who crawled to his position.

After some time a sortie was made, and the Sepoys were defeated. For this brave work Sergeant Halliwell received the Victoria cross.

CHINESE SPIES.

The use of the Chinese as spies in the Manchurian war furnished the Japanese with the most valuable information. The system of the Japanese in employing the Chinese was worked out to the minutest detail. In advance of the troops always marched the Chinese, who examined everything with the greatest care, for the slightest carelessness meant instant death to them. When a detachment took up a position the advance parties did not occupy their posts until the spies had beaten the neighboring ground and had reported no Russians in the vicinity. All along the line of advance of the enemy a network of spies was deployed. It was thus that groups of Chinese were

seen on the heights at Santsagoou. They preceded the Japanese reconnoissance parties and by their own location showed what positions were not occupied by the Russians. The Japanese went the Germans "one better." During the Franco-Prussian war, the Germans would pick out an inhabitant who had a wife and children and would lodge with him in the guise of a domestic a clever man, usually an officer. The peasant, told in advance that his wife and children would be put to death if he did not return, was sent into cantonments of the enemy. He entered under some pretext and thus obtained information which he communicated to his pseudo valet. The Japanese modified this practice by making it severer still. They took away from Chinese families the fathers and sons, keeping the father as hostage while the sons were sent out as spies. Generally they would send two brothers in the same direction but at different moments in order to compare reports brought in by them. If these reports disagreed the father was put to death.

SPECIAL WAR TAX ON WEALTH FOR MILITARY INCREASES IN GERMANY.

The five wealthiest persons in Germany and the share which each of them contributes to the special war tax on wealth for military increases, sanctioned some time ago, are as follows: Frau Bertha Krupp von Bohlen and Halbach, \$2,200,000; Prince Guido Henckel von Donnersmarck, \$1,050,000; the Kaiser, \$1,025,000; Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, \$850,000; Prince von Thurn and Taxis, \$375,000.

There are 13,214 children under fourteen years, of whom 7,434 are boys, employed in mills and factories in Germany, according to the latest official returns.

The number of children between the ages of fourteen and sixteen employed in 110,000 German mills and factories is 505,000, of whom nearly 333,000 are boys.

The greater number of little boys are found in metal and machine shops and in textile factories. The greatest number of little girls are found in textile and clothing factories.

The greatest number of boys between fourteen and sixteen years are employed in machine and metal shops, in mining, in stone quarries, in textile mills, in food factories, in wood carving, in carpentry and in designing and drawing.

The greatest number of girls, between fourteen and sixteen years, are employed in textile mills, in clothing factories, in metal shops and in paper factories.

Throughout Germany the various governments are making paternal efforts to lower the cost of living. In Bavaria the State Fisheries Department has supervised moving picture lectures and cooking classes for the purpose of increasing the use of fish. Over 17,000 men and women attended the lectures, and over 10,000 women and girls took part in the last year in the cooking classes. Every week, in nineteen Bavarian cities, there were "cheap fish days."



ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.—The base is made of maple, and the center piece of black w/ mut, the whole thing about 1 1/4 inches in diameter, with a metal hook on the back so that it may be slipped over edge of the vest pocket. Expose to view your New Electric Bell, when your friend will push the button expecting to hear it ring. As soon as he touches it, you will see some of the liveliest dancing you ever witnessed. The Electric Button is heavily charged and will give a smart shock when the button is pushed.

Price 10c., by mail, postpaid.
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE MAGIC DAGGER.

A wonderful illusion. To all appearances it is an ordinary dagger which you can flourish around in your hand and suddenly state that you think you have lived long enough and had better commit suicide, at the same time plunging the dagger up to the hilt into your breast or side, or you can pretend to stab a friend or acquaintance. Of course your friend or yourself are not injured in the least, but the deception is perfect and will startle all who see it.

Price, 10c., or 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

MUSICAL SEAT.

The best joke out. You can have more fun than a circus, with one of these novelties. All you have to do is to place one on a chair seat (hidden under a cushion, if possible). Then tell your friend to sit down. An unearthly shriek from the little round drum will send your victim up in the air, the most puzzled and astonished mortal on earth. Don't miss getting one of these genuine laugh producers. Perfectly harmless, and never misses doing its work.

Price 20 cents each, by mail, post-paid
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

CARD THROUGH THE HAT TRICK.

With this trick you borrow a hat, and apparently shove a card up through the crown, without injuring the card or hat. The operation can be reversed, the performer seemingly pushing the card down through the crown into the hat again. It is a trick which will puzzle

and interest the closest observer and detection is almost impossible. It is so simple that a child can learn how to perform it in a few minutes.

Price 10 cents each, by mail, post-paid
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

ITCH POWDER.

Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch.

It will make him scratch, rear, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

Ayvad's Water-Wings

Learn to swim by one trial
Price 25 cents, Postpaid
These water-wings take up no more room than a pocket-hankerchief. They weigh 3 ounces and support from 50 to 250 pounds. With a pair anyone can learn to swim or float. For use, you have only to wet them, blow them up, and press together the two wings under the mouthpiece.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



New and amusing joker. The victim is told to hold the tube close to his eye so as to exclude all light from the back, and then to remove the tube until pictures appear in the center. In trying to locate the pictures he will receive the finest black-eyes you ever saw. We furnish a small box of blackening preparation with each tube, so the joke can be used indefinitely. Those not in the trick will be caught every time. Absolutely harmless. Price by mail 15c. each; 2 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE JOKER'S CIGAR.

The biggest sell of the season. A real cigar made of tobacco, but secreted in the center of cigar about one-half inch from end is a fountain of sparklets. The moment the fire reaches this fountain hundreds of sparks of fire burst forth in every direction, to the astonishment of the smoker. The fire is stage fire, and will not burn the skin or clothing. After the fireworks the victim can continue smoking the cigar to the end. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c.; 1 dozen, 90c., mailed, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

BINGO.

It is a little metal box. It looks very innocent. But it is supplied with an ingenious mechanism which shoots off a harmless cap when it is opened. You can have more fun than a circus with this new trick. Place the BINGO in or under any article and it will go off when the article is opened or removed. It can be used as a funny joke by being placed in a purse, cigarette box or between the leaves of a magazine, also, under any movable article, such as a book, tray, dish, etc. The BINGO can also be used as a Burglar Alarm or as a Theft Preventer by being placed in a drawer, money till, under a door or window, or under any article that would be moved or disturbed should a theft be attempted.

Price 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK PUZZLE PURSE.

The first attempt usually made to open it, is to press down the little knob in the center of the purse, when a small needle runs out and stabs them in the finger, but does not open it. You can open it before their eyes and still they will be unable to open it.

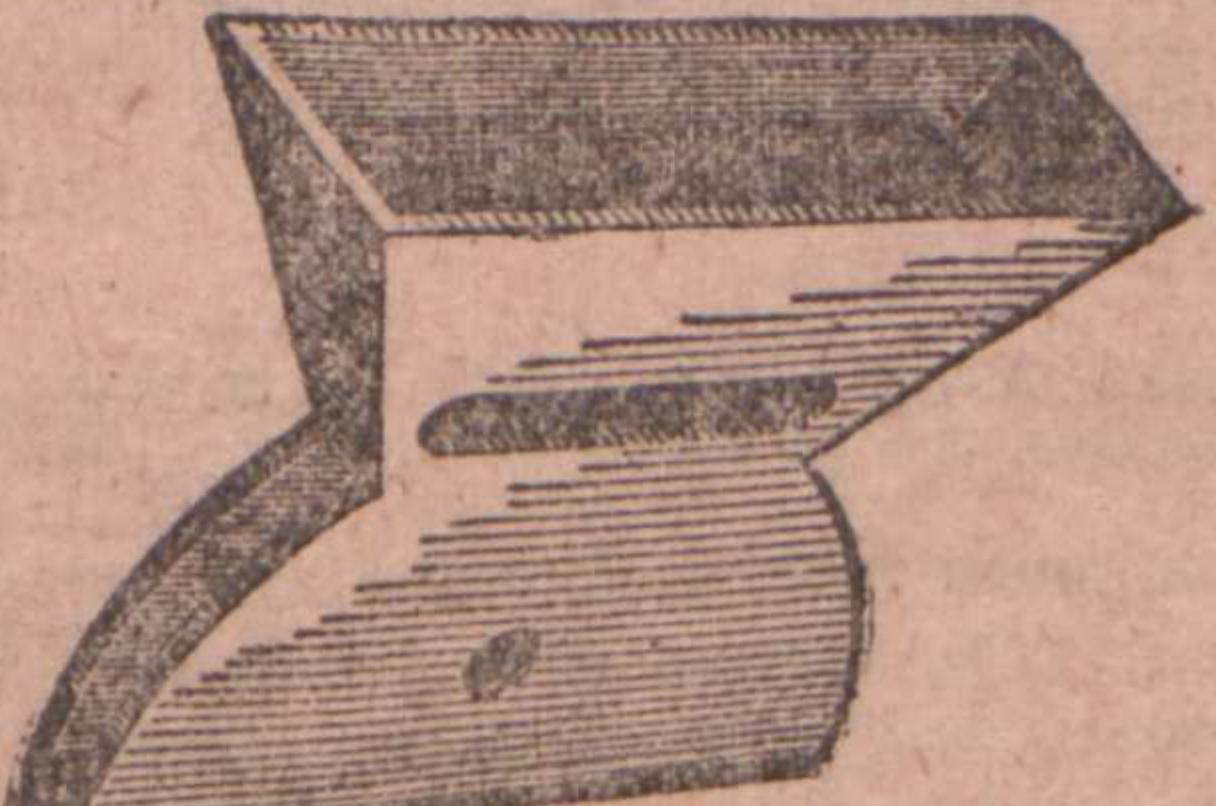
Price, 25c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

DUPLEX BICYCLE WHISTLE.

This is a double whistle, producing loud but very rich, harmonious sounds, entirely different from ordinary whistles. It is just the thing for bicyclists or sportsmen, its peculiar double and resonant tones at once attracting attention. It is an imported whistle, handsomely nickel plated, and will be found a very useful and handy pocket companion. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., sent by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



THE FLUTOPHONE.—A new musical instrument, producing the sweetest dulcet tones of the flute. The upper part of the instrument is placed in the mouth, the lips covering the openings in the centre. Then by blowing gently upon it you can play any tune desired as easily as whistling. But little practice is required to become a finished player. It is made entirely of metal, and will last a lifetime. We send full instructions with each instrument.

Price 8 cents, by mail, postpaid.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

BLACK-EYE JOKE.

New and amusing joker. The victim is told to hold the tube close to his eye so as to exclude all light from the back, and then to remove the tube until pictures appear in the center. In trying to locate the pictures he will receive the finest black-eyes you ever saw. We furnish a small box of blackening preparation with each tube, so the joke can be used indefinitely. Those not in the trick will be caught every time. Absolutely harmless. Price by mail 15c. each; 2 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TOBACCO HABIT You can conquer it easily in 3 days, improve your health, prolong your life. No more stomach trouble, no foul breath, no heart weakness. Regain manly vigor, calm nerves, clear eyes and superior mental strength. Whether you chew or smoke pipe, cigarettes, cigars, get my interesting Tobacco Book. Worth its weight in gold. Mailed free. E. J. WOODS, 534 Sixth Ave., 228 C, New York, N. Y.

12 FOR A DIME AND A 2c STAMP

Ventriloquist Double Throat
Fits roof of mouth; always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Neigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary, and imitate birds and beasts of the field and forest. Loads of fun. Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Send the dime and a 2c stamp to-day.

DOUBLE THROAT CO., Dept. K, Frenchtown, N. J.

IMITATION FLIES.

Absolutely true to Nature! A dandy scarf-pin and a rattling good joke. It is impossible to do these pins justice with a description. You have to see them to understand how lifelike they are. When people see them on you they want to brush them off. They wonder "why that fly sticks to you" so persistently. This is the most realistic novelty ever put on the market. It is a distinct ornament for anybody's necktie, and a decided joke on those who try to chase it.

Price, 10c. by mail postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.

The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nickelized tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballerina in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust. Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer. Price 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

POCKET WHISK-BROOM.

This is no toy, but a real whisk-broom, 6 1/2 inches high. It is made of imported Japanese bristles, neatly put together, and can easily be carried in the vest pocket, ready for use at any moment, for hats or clothing, etc. Price 10 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., N. Y.

PIGGY IN A COFFIN.

This is a wicked pig that died at an early age, and here he is in his coffin ready for burial. There will be a great many mourners at his funeral, for this coffin, pretty as it looks, is very tricky, and the man who gets it open will feel real grief. The coffin is made of metal, perfectly shaped and beautifully lacquered. The trick is to open it to see the pig. The man that tries it gets his fingers and feelings hurt, and piggy comes out to grunt at his victims. The tubular end of the coffin, which everyone (in trying to open) presses inward, contains a needle which stabs the victim in his thumb or finger every time. This is the latest and a very "impressive" trick. It can be opened easily by anyone in the secret, and as a neat catch-joke to save yourself from a bore is unsurpassed. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., postpaid; one dozen by express, 75c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

ROUGH AND READY TUMBLERS.

These lively acrobats are handsomely decorated with the U. S. flag and with gold and silver stars and hearts. Upon placing them up-

on any flat surface and tilting it they at once begin a most wonderful performance, climbing and tumbling over each other and chasing each other in every direction, as if the evil spirit was after them, causing roars of laughter from the spectators. They actually appear imbued with life. What causes them to cut up such antics is a secret that may not be known even to the owner of the unruly subjects. If you want some genuine fun send for a set of our tumblers.

Price per set, 10c. mailed, postpaid.

A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

VANISHING CIGAR.



This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE JUMPING FROG.



This little novelty creates a world of laughter. Its chief attractiveness is that it takes a few seconds before leaping high in the air, so that when set, very innocently along side of an unsuspecting person, he is suddenly startled by the wonderful activity of this frog. Price, 15c. each by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

MANY TOOL KEY RING.

The wonder of the age. The greatest small tool in the world. In this little instrument you have in combination seven useful tools embracing Key Ring, Pencil Sharpener, Nail Cutter and Cleaner, Watch Opener, Cigar Clipper, Letter Opener and Screw Driver. It is not a toy, but a useful article, made of cutlery steel, tempered and highly nickelized. Therefore will carry an edge the same as any piece of cutlery. As a useful tool, nothing has ever been offered to the public to equal it. Price, 15c., mailed, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



THE PEG JUMPER.

A very effective pocket trick, easily to be performed by any one. A miniature paddle is shown. Central holes are drilled through it. A wooden peg is inside of the upper hole. Showing now both sides of the paddle, the performer causes, by simply breathing upon it, the peg to leave the upper hole, and appear in the middle one. Then it jumps to the lower hole, back to the middle one, and lastly to the upper hole. Both sides of the paddle are repeatedly shown.

Price by mail, 15c.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



THE FIGHTING ROOSTERS.



A full blooded pair of fighting game cocks. These Liliputian fighters have real feathers, yellow legs and fiery red combs, their movements when fighting are perfectly natural and lifelike, and the secret of their movements is known only to the operator, who can cause them to battle with each other as often and as long as desired. Independent of their fighting proclivities they make very pretty mantel ornaments. Price for the pair in a strong box, 10c.; 3 pairs for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

LIGHTNING TRICK BOX.



A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

NEW TEN-CENT FOUNTAIN PEN.



One of the most peculiar and mystifying pens on the market. It requires no ink. All you have to do is to dip it in water, and it will write for an indefinite period. The secret can only be learned by procuring one, and you can make it a source of both pleasure and amusement by claiming to your friends what it can do and then demonstrating the fact. Moreover, it is a good pen, fit for practical use, and will never leak ink into your pocket, as a defective fountain pen might do.

Price, 18c. each by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



GOOD LUCK BANKS.

Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickelized brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

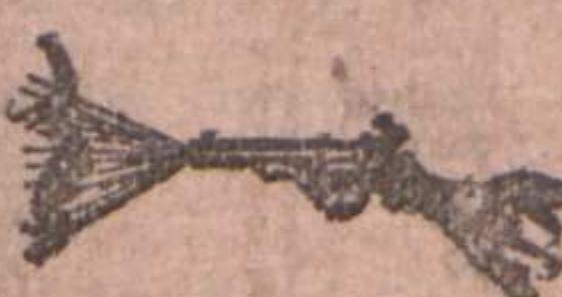
EGGS OF PHARAOH'S SERPENTS.



A wonderful and startling novelty! "Pharaoh's Serpents" are produced from a small egg, no larger than a pea. Place one of them on a plate, touch fire to it with a common match, and instantly a large serpent, a yard or more in length, slowly uncoils itself from the burning egg. Each serpent assumes a different position. One will appear to be gliding over the ground, with head erect, as though spying danger; another will coil itself up, as if preparing for the fatal spring upon its victim, while another will stretch out lazily, apparently enjoying its usual noonday nap. Immediately after the egg stops burning, the serpent hardens, and may afterward be kept as an amusing curiosity. They are put up in wooden boxes, twelve eggs in a box. Price, 8c., 3 boxes for 20c.; 1 dozen boxes for 60c., sent by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

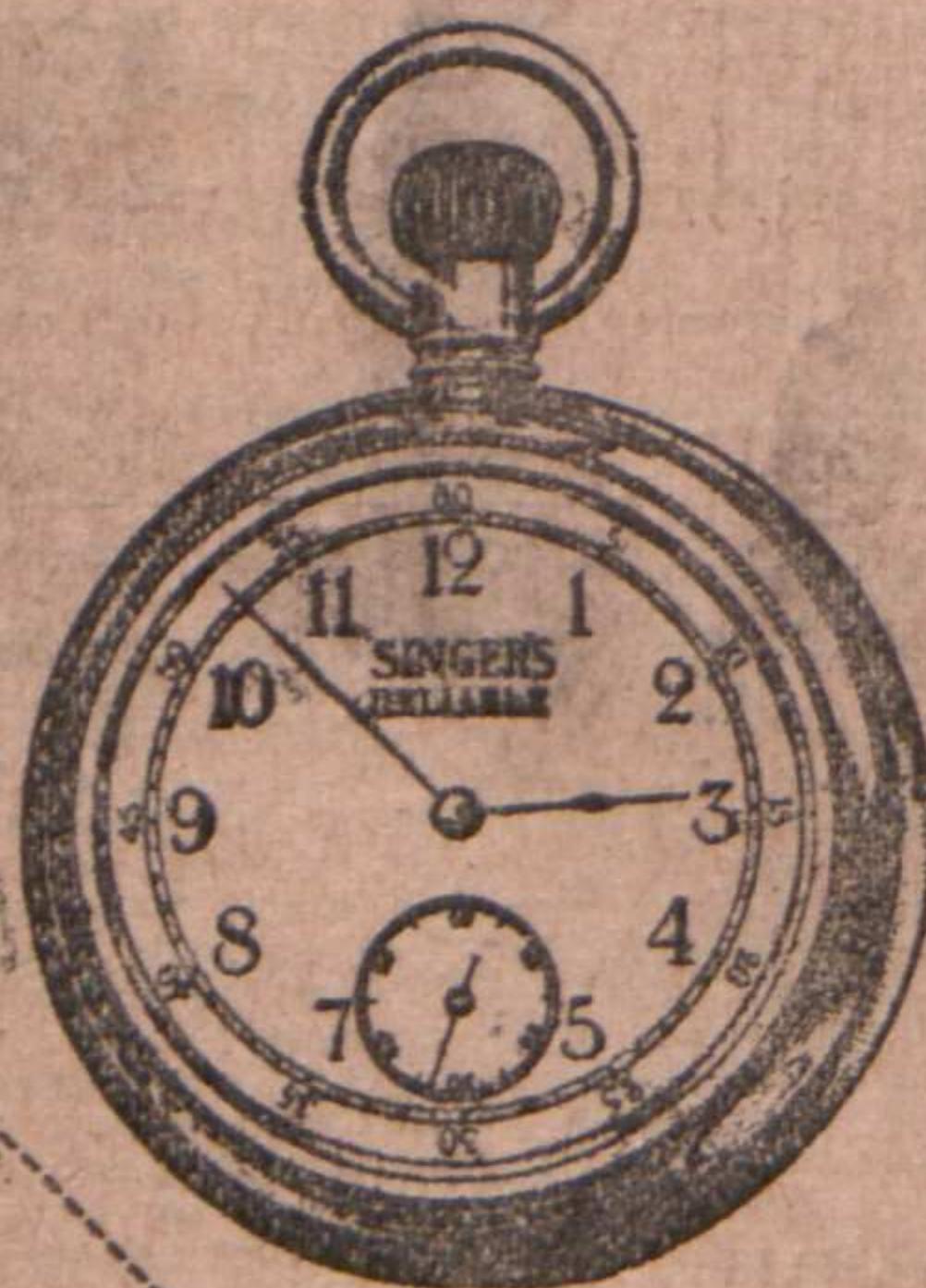
DEAD SHOT SQUIRT PISTOL.



If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"I didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of

water, and taking aim, press the rubber bulb at the butt of the Pistol, when a small stream of water is squirted into his face. The best thing to do then is to pocket your gun and run. There are "loads of fun" in this wicked little joker, which looks like a real revolver, trigger, cock, chambers, barrel and all. Price only 7c.; 4 for 25c.; one dozen 60c. by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



Look! A GRAND PREMIUM Look!

One of these fine watches FREE to anyone sending us

One—1 year's subscription at . . . \$2.50

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For either of the following: "Moving Picture Stories," "Happy Days," "Wild West Weekly," "Fame and Fortune Weekly," "The Liberty Boys of '76," "Secret Service," "Work and Win," or "Pluck and Luck."

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It is American-made, open face, stem wind and set, and will run from 30 to 36 hours with one winding. The movement is the same size as an expensive railroad timepiece, absolutely accurate, and each one is guaranteed. The cases are made in Gold Plate, Polished Nickel, Gun-metal with Gilt center and plain Gun-metal.

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